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PRICE THIRTY-FIVE CENTS

JOB THIRTEEN

BY

CARL WEBSTER PIERCE



THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY
PHILADELPHIA

Successful Rural Plays

A Strong List From Which to Select Your Next Play

FARM FOLKS. A Rural Play in Four Acts, by ARTHUR LEWIS TUBBS. For five male and six female characters. Time of playing, two hours and a half. One simple exterior, two easy interior scenes. Costumes, modern. Flora Goodwin, a farmer's daughter, is engaged to Philip Burleigh, a young New Yorker. Philip's mother wants him to marry a society woman, and by falsehoods makes Flora believe Philip does not love her. Dave Weston, who wants Flora himself, helps the deception by intercepting a letter from Philip to Flora. She agrees to marry Dave, but on the eve of their marriage Dave confesses, Philip learns the truth, and he and Flora are reunited. It is a simple plot, but full of speeches and situations that sway an audience alternately to tears and to laughter.

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THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY
PHILADELPHIA

Job Thirteen

A Comedy in Three Acts

By

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Job Thirteen

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Job Thirteen

CAST OF CHARACTERS

HENRY VAN DERR,

A home-loving man, risen from laborer to great wealth

DAN BOGGS.....*An upstanding young man*

JAMES.....*The butler*

PROFESSOR SAISELLE.....*A French instructor*

MR. CLIFTON.....*Who sells "family trees"*

COUNT EGOZZI.....*Seeking a wealthy wife*

ROBERT CUTTER.....*A high class crook*

POLICEMAN.

EDYTHE VAN DERR,

Henry's wife, with social aspirations

MARIANNE VAN DERR.....*Henry's daughter*

GRACE KEENE.....*Accomplice to Cutter*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—The Van Derr living-room. Tuesday morning.

ACT II.—*Scene I.* Office of Robert Cutter. Wednesday morning. *Scene II.* Same as ACT I. Wednesday afternoon.

ACT III.—Same as ACT I. Friday.

NOTE:—If desired, the play may be produced with six males and three females. PROFESSOR SAISELLE can double ROBERT CUTTER, and CLIFTON can double POLICEMAN.

TIME OF PLAYING:—Two hours.

STORY OF THE PLAY

Mrs. Van Derr has social aspirations. Her husband, Henry, who rose from a laborer to great wealth, has none and wishes to live a simple life. Their daughter, Marianne, wants to marry Dan Boggs, a good upstanding young man, but her mother wants her to marry Count Egozzi. Mr. Van Derr realizes that the Count is an adventurer, and as he favors Dan's suit, he determines to bring his wife to her senses. This he does by pretending they have lost all their money. Mrs. Van Derr decides to abandon all social climbing and that Dan is the man for Marianne. Mr. Van Derr explains, and everyone is happy.

Job Thirteen

ACT I

SCENE.—*The VAN DERR living-room; Tuesday morning. The entrances are C. by a wide, arched doorway opening into a hall; and R. by a door opening into the study. At right of center entrance there is a large, empty bookcase; and on wall at left of entrance is the push-button of the servants' bell. A Japanese screen is set in the upper left corner of the room. Down left is a small bookcase containing the "Encyclopædia Britannica" and a ten-volume "History of England." Left center is a library table on which lies a copy of "Burke's Peerage." At right of table is an easy chair. Just below right entrance is a small desk on which the telephone stands. The furnishings of the room give a general appearance of lavish expenditure; but a very decided lack of taste and artistic arrangement prevails.*

(*The curtain discovers HENRY VAN DERR in easy chair beside table. He is an honest, straightforward, democratic man of about forty-five, blessed with much common sense which offsets his lack of education. He heartily dislikes the innovations in his mode of living which have been thrust upon him by his wife. His speech is slow and deliberate. For the most part he is meek in his wife's presence, but upon occasion can hold his own with her. EDYTHE VAN DERR stands C. She*

is physically larger than her husband, but not mentally. Over-ambitious for social prestige she awkwardly attempts to gain it by every means which happens to flash into her head. DAN BOGGS stands before a chair at the right. He is a manly American youth of about twenty-four years. HENRY, weakly protesting, speaks to his wife.)

HENRY. I won't go, I tell yer, if I have to ride in that darned limousine. (To DAN.) I call it tough when a man has to ride three blocks in an auto when he has feet that have treated him fair an' square as many years as mine have.

(He sticks his feet out before him and gazes at them.)

EDYTHE (sharply). See here, Henry Van Derr —

HENRY. Van Derr! My name always has been, is now, and ever shall be Vander, V-A-N-D-E-R.

EDYTHE (paying no attention to his protest). What will the neighbors say if they see you, a half a millionaire—I mean the owner of half a million dollars,—walking down the street!

HENRY. They had plenty of chance to see me in the past, an' they will continue to do so.

EDYTHE (with a tone of finality). I guess they won't. If you haven't pride enough to live up to your station in life, I'll drag you up to it.

HENRY (carelessly). Look here, Edith. Whose money bought the ticket to this here station?

EDYTHE. You miser! If I didn't spend your money for you it would be rotting in savings banks—or in an old stocking. (To DAN.) My spouse had five hundred thousand dollars scattered around in nearly as many savings banks at three per cent! Imagine leaving a fortune to a business man like that!

HENRY (with a sigh). It was a sorry day for me when that fool lawyer found that I was Uncle's only heir.

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DAN. May I see Marion pretty soon, Mrs. Vander?
—er—I mean Mrs. *Van Derr*.

EDYTHE (*coldly*). I am afraid not. Her French professor is due now; and then Count Egozzi is coming to call.

HENRY (*chuckling*). The Count of no account.

EDYTHE. Henry!

HENRY. Dan, his pocket-book is flatter'n a flounder, but you ought to see how he keeps his title shined up. It glares in Mother's eyes like the headlight on a locomotive.

EDYTHE. Henry, you are impossible!

DAN. Mrs. Van Derr, I would like to see her just a minute. I have hardly seen her in the last six months.

HENRY. Ho-ho! Dan, Mother has changed the spellin' of Marion's name.

DAN. What?

EDYTHE. Don't speak of me as "Mother." And stop your talk.

HENRY (*gravely*). All right, Mrs. *Van Derr*. (*To DAN.*) Bein' the wife of a man whose uncle was so careless as to burden him with half a million automatically changes the spellin' of your daughter's name from M-A-R-I-O-N to M-A-R-I-A-N-N-E. (*In a mock whisper, indicating his wife.*) And now hers is spelt E-D-Y-T-H-E. Wouldn't that knock you cold?

EDYTHE. Henry!

DAN. Is your name still the same?

HENRY. You bet your life! She decided that in view of the fact that Longfellow, Clay and a bunch of English kings were called Henry, I could keep mine. I think the kings turned the trick. It was either them or Henry Ford. The latter's money, not his car, lets him in. Speakin' o' kings, the butler says to me this mornin', "You ought to read what happened to Henry the eighth's wives, sir. You might get some helpful suggestions." Now I like that butler; he's what I call a good —

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EDYTHE. What did I tell you about conversing with James?

HENRY (to DAN). That's the latest. The butler's right name is George; but Mother—er—*my wife*, —says all butlers should be Jameses, so James it is.

EDYTHE (*with dignity*). Henry, you are impossible!

HENRY. Another! Dan, if you have five hundred thousand in the family, *something* must be "impossible" several times a day.

(*Enter JAMES, C. He is a rotund, bald English butler, with a decided English accent. His dignity is impressive.*)

JAMES. Professor Saiselle, madame.

EDYTHE. Show him in.

(*Exit JAMES, C.*)

HENRY. Which one o' your phoney dudes is comin' now, Ma,—er—Edith?

EDYTHE. The Professor is Marianne's French instructor.

HENRY. I s'pose he's necessary so 's you can tell what you're eatin' when you go to those swell restaurants where you get lots o' silverware to handle, and little to use with it.

(*Enter PROFESSOR SAISELLE, C. He is dressed in correct morning attire; is somewhat bald, wears a goatee and long waxed moustaches.*)

PROF. S. (*effusively*). *Ah, bon jour, Madame.*

(*Crosses to EDYTHE and kisses her hand.*)

HENRY (to DAN). Wouldn't y' call *that* impossible!

PROF. S. Madame she ees *charmante aujourd'hui*.

EDYTHE (*wondering what he has said*). Oh, Professor, you don't mean it!

HENRY (to DAN). That guy ought to be naturalized or Americanized or somethin'.

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PROF. S. And Mademoiselle, she ees quite ready for
ze *leçon*, ze *grande langue Française*?

EDYTHE. Beautiful day, isn't it? Come right into
the study, Professor.

(*Exeunt EDYTHE and PROFESSOR SAISELLE, R.*)

HENRY. What d'ye know about that guy gettin' seven
bucks for an hour of that polly voo stuff? Not
that I don't want to spend the money for my
Marion, but think o' the poor devils who work
two long days with a pick and shovel for that
much. By golly, I'd be happy if Edith would let
me swing a pick instead of keepin' me caged like
a bird.

DAN. It must be hard on you to be kept like a hot-
house plant. You have always been so active.

HENRY. Until I was incapacitated by half a million
dollars. Danny, I was never so happy as when
I was busy, and I've stood this tomfoolery just as
long as I can. (*Looks around room and speaks
cautiously.*) I'll get murdered when she finds
this out. Listen. I went down-town early this
mornin' and got me a job. Now I can be happy
again. (*Rubbing his hands together.*) It will
seem like old times to be back on a job!

DAN. Gee, I sure do wish that it was more like old
times for me. (*Sighs.*) Six months ago I never
thought that anything like this would happen.

HENRY. I wish to blazes that that uncle of mine had
got frozen to death in Alaska *before* he dug that
fool half million out of the ground instead of
after. It's brought me nothin' but unhappiness.
Money ain't no good in such quantities.

DAN (*discouraged*). I guess that I shall have to quit
calling here. Mrs. Vander seems dead set against
my seeing Marion.

HENRY (*earnestly*). Oh, Dan, don't do that! You
are all that has kept me from suicide—you and
the butler. An' Marion still loves you, y' know.

DAN. Of course. Well, I'll stick it out as long as I
can.

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HENRY. By golly, you two are goin' to be married in spite of all the moth-eaten aristocracy that Mother can dig up.

DAN. I'm glad to hear you say that.

HENRY. I'm just a plain New England Yankee; ain't got much book education; ain't much of a business head, for all I'm a Yankee. I'll admit I don't know how to look after half a million dollars; I never expected to have 'em. But they ain't a-goin' to spoil my life, nor Marion's, nor yours; and I'll be hanged if I don't find a way to keep 'em from spoilin' that money-drunk wife o' mine.

(Enter MARIANNE, C. She is a pretty girl of about twenty-two.)

MARIANNE. Dan!

DAN. Marion!

MARIANNE. I'm so glad to see you.

(They embrace.)

DAN *(dramatically)*. It seems years since last we met!

HENRY. How did you escape your mother and that frog-eater?

MARIANNE. I haven't. I'm on my way to them now.

DAN. I was afraid that I was never going to see you again.

MARIANNE. It does seem a long while since the last time.

DAN. We'll hope for better times soon.

MARIANNE. Just like the old ones.

DAN. You bet.

HENRY. Six months ago we were in a little seven-room house. I had a good job in the factory as foreman; and you children were to be married in a year. And then that fool money came. Now look at us. Livin' in this great ark; me out of a job; and Ma tryin' to break things up between you. But she won't do it, by golly.

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DAN. It won't be many weeks before I get that promotion; and then perhaps we can get married; that is, if you can hold off the dukes and counts until then.

HENRY. Dan, I vow that I won't have any son-in-law but you.

MARIANNE. We will all stick together on that point.

DAN. I don't understand what has set your mother against me so. Six months ago I was welcomed by her at any time. Now I get the cold shoulder. She didn't speak to me more than twice in fifteen minutes just now.

HENRY (*dryly*). She was talkin' to me, all right.

MARIANNE. Oh, it is just her social ambition. She wants a title in the family. She wants to "live like a lady," as she expresses it. You have no title. And this morning she told us that your name haunted her.

HENRY (*with a chuckle*). She said "Boggs! Boggs! We *will* be in a social mire if we have any *Boggs* in the family." By golly, I'd rather call you Mrs. Boggs than Countess Egozzi.

(*Enter JAMES, C.*)

JAMES. Miss Marion, your mother wishes me to inform you that the Professor is awaiting you in the study.

(*Exit C.*)

HENRY. Run along, quick, before she gets all het up again.

DAN. Good-bye, Marion. We'll get your name changed to Boggs yet.

(*Exit MARIANNE, R.*)

HENRY (*calling after her*). And change back the first one, too. (*To DAN.*) This new-fangled spellin' sounds almost the same, but looks like the deuce on paper.

DAN. I must get along, or instead of that promotion I'll get fired. Oh, I forgot to tell Marion something. The company has assigned me a flivver to run 'round in.

HENRY. That's fine.

DAN. I've got to drive out into the country a few miles to inspect a job, and if Marion can get away I'd like her to go. (*Looks at watch.*) I'll stop in about eleven to get her.

HENRY. I'll tell her, and try to hold Mother while she makes an escape.

DAN (*with a courtly bow*). Good-bye, Mr. *Van Derr*.

HENRY. Get out, you scamp! (*Exit DAN, C. HENRY gazes sadly around.*) Home, Sweet Home!

(*He goes to study door and listens, then goes to center door, looks up and down the hall, and next rings the electric bell. After a pause, during which HENRY wanders about the room, JAMES enters, C.*)

JAMES. Yes, sir.

HENRY. Say, Jim, do you think we can arrange a little game for to-night?

JAMES (*familiarly, as always when speaking with HENRY*). For 'eaven's sake, sir, kindly call me George.

HENRY (*slapping his shoulder*). All right, George, old thing.

JAMES. That sounds better, sir.

HENRY. I'm not your king; don't "sir" me.

JAMES. Very good, sir. Oh! Hi 'umbly begs your pardon.

HENRY. Don't slip again. You tell that chauffeur, —what's his name—François—to meet us in the basement again to-night, and we'll have a little game of stud. I don't play stud often, but I must have some excitement after not even bein' allowed to walk.

JAMES. The chauffeur requested me to hinform you that 'is name is not François. Mrs. Van Derr hinsists that all chauffeurs should be named Fran-

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çois. But 'e wasn't. 'E is a Greek, hand Hi can't even pronounce 'is name.

HENRY. Poor feller. So she's changed him, too. Tell him I'll call him Frank. I know a Greek named Frank who runs an ice-cream parlor. By golly, I like you, George. You and Dan are the only real men who ever come into this house.

(Enter EDYTHE, R., unobserved by the men.)

JAMES. Hi 'ave a new story that the cook told me.

HENRY. Fine!

JAMES. Hit's a rare good one.

(He nudges HENRY with his elbow.)

HENRY *(patting JAMES' shoulder)*. Fire away!

EDYTHE *(sternly)*. James!

JAMES *(greatly startled)*. Coming, Madame—er,—
Hi mean *going*!

(Exit JAMES, C., with great dignity.)

EDYTHE. The very next time I catch you speaking so familiarly with James I shall discharge him and get a Japanese servant.

HENRY. You'll have to change names then, all right. I never heard of a Jap named James.

(Telephone rings. HENRY starts to answer it.)

EDYTHE. Leave that alone. *(She rings for JAMES.)*

HENRY. Well, of all the crazy notions!

(Telephone rings again. Enter JAMES, C.)

EDYTHE. James, the 'phone. *(He answers.)*

JAMES. Mr. Van Derr's residence....Who is it, please?....I will see. Hold the wire. *(To EDYTHE.)* The Gilt Edge Book Company, Madame. Their man was here yesterday and measured the bookcase.

(EDYTHE goes to 'phone. Exit JAMES, C.)

EDYTHE *(at 'phone)*. Yes....Yes. You have the measurements, haven't you? Now this is what I

want done. I want those shelves filled with books.....Oh, goodness. It doesn't matter in the least what they are; just send along those with the prettiest bindings.....Yes. (*Hangs up.*)

HENRY. That's a pretty way to pick out your readin' matter, I must say. I hope the color of the bindin's won't clash with the wall-paper.

EDYTHE. It might do you some good if you read *any-thing*.

HENRY (*pointing to bookcase at left*). Shall I start with that Encyclopædia and that History of England in ten volumes which came the other day? Say, why don't you present that bunch o' histories to George—I mean James? He was born in London. He might appreciate 'em.

EDYTHE. I would like to know how long it is going to take to accustom you to the presence of servants.

HENRY. That butler's a good sport, and you can't get me to snub him.

EDYTHE. After six months of heroic struggle on my part you haven't acquired the least bit of polish.

HENRY. Six months ago I suited you all right.

EDYTHE (*with a sigh*). Six months ago I lived in a dream world, and did not think that I would ever see it in reality. I was resigned to my fate, that is why you suited me; but now it is different.

HENRY. You were full of Laura Jean Libby and the rest o' them paper-covered women. But you let me live in peace, and paid attention to gettin' three squares a day, instead of seein' how much you could spend. (*Bell rings off stage.*) Now who is that? It's just after ten o'clock, and there have been about a dozen good-fer-nothin's here already. (*Glances at door to study.*) Poor Marion. Dancin' teacher, French teacher, and ——

EDYTHE. Stop your grumbling. It is probably the gentleman from the Genealogical Research Service.

HENRY. The *what*?

EDYTHE. You wouldn't know if I repeated it a thousand times. They have been looking up our an-

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cestry,—charting our family tree, and searching out our family crest.

HENRY. Huh! What does it amount to?

EDYTHE. I don't know exactly. Their rates are very reasonable.

HENRY. I don't mean in money. What good is the information?

EDYTHE. What good is it? Henry! We must be able to assure Count Egozzi that he is marrying into a worth-while family.

HENRY. A half a million dollars speaks for the worth of the family in the Count's mind. But, see here, Edith, that funny foreigner and his tin armor haven't got a ghost of a show with Marion alongside o' Dan Boggs.

EDYTHE. Don't mention that repulsive name. A son-in-law named Boggs,—or one of royal blood. How can there be a choice?

HENRY. Well, Marion is goin' to make it herself; and, by golly, I'll stand by her.

(Enter JAMES, C.)

JAMES. Mr. Clifton is here, Madame.

EDYTHE. Show him in.

(Exit JAMES, C.)

HENRY. I suppose that I'll have to go down cellar with the dog.

EDYTHE. No; stay. You may acquire a few points of etiquette.

HENRY. Etiquette! Six months ago you didn't know that fish was supposed to be eaten without the aid of a knife; and a good old ordinary fork did duty for the boiled potatoes and the salad, too,—when we were lucky enough to have salad. We had dinner at noon, and supper at night; and I didn't have to dress up in one o' them trick shirts to eat, either.

EDYTHE *(covering her eyes with her hand; dramatically)*. Stop! Let the dead past bury its dead.

HENRY. You and your ancestry ghoul don't seem to be doin' that.

(Enter CLIFTON, c. *He is a suave, smooth-tongued business man; is neatly dressed in a light business suit. He carries a brief-case.*)

CLIFTON. Good-morning, Mrs. Van Derr.

EDYTHE. Good-morning, Mr. Clifton. This is my husband. Henry—Mr. Clifton.

HENRY. Pleased to meet you. (*They shake hands.*) My wife tells me you have been diggin' into our past. I'll bet you dug through considerable hard pan.

EDYTHE. Henry!

CLIFTON. I have made some very important discoveries. In fact, I might term them startling.

EDYTHE (*eagerly*). Let me hear them. Can we claim *Mayflower* descent?

HENRY. Easy there. The New Englanders have that ship so overloaded now that she will never weather a storm.

EDYTHE (*endeavoring to silence her husband with a glance as she speaks to CLIFTON*). And have you discovered the family crest?

CLIFTON. You are too eager, Mrs. Van Derr. Let us take things up systematically.

EDYTHE. I am so excited. Henry, think of it! We are about to hear in detail of our ancestors. Doesn't it thrill you?

HENRY. Not so much as speculation on the future—based on the happenin's o' the last six months.

(*He places a chair at left of table for CLIFTON. EDYTHE sits in easy chair. HENRY draws small chair c. and sits.*)

CLIFTON. Before I give my report, Mrs. Van Derr, I wish to state that the information I am about to reveal has been compiled with the utmost care and diligence.

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EDYTHER. Certainly.

CLIFTON. Not only did we secure data from our London representative, but I, myself, made a trip to Boston to consult some rare documents and volumes in a private collection to which very few persons have access.

HENRY (*aside*). I wonder how much extra for that?

EDYTHER. How thorough you are.

CLIFTON. It pays us to be accurate.

(Opens brief-case and spreads out papers.)

HENRY (*aside*). I bet it does.

EDYTHER. Do tell me when my father's side of the house first set foot in this country. *Did* they come on the *Mayflower*?

CLIFTON. I am sorry to say that they did not. The earliest trace I can find was this entry in the log-book of a slave-ship which arrived in Virginia from Africa in 1630. It is a sworn copy of the original which is preserved in a small museum in Virginia. The entry is under date of July 15, 1630, and reads: "At the point of a pistol I was forced to throw into irons one John Ralston, a worthless roustabout, who joined the crew on the African coast. His cruel treatment of the negroes under his command has been beyond description; and even his own shipmates are relieved that he is under restraint. Signed, Amos Calvin, Captain."

EDYTHER. So my ancestor was a ship's captain?

CLIFTON. Why, no. Your ancestor was the worthless roustabout!

EDYTHER. Mr. Clifton!

HENRY (*gleefully*). What a prize package you have drawn in this ancestral grab-bag.

EDYTHER. There must be some mistake.

CLIFTON. I have told you how carefully this information was gathered.

EDYTHER (*hopefully*). But the Revolutionary War?

Can't you find that some of my people were heroes in the Revolution?

CLIFTON. Mrs. Van Derr, I have never traced such a peculiar line in all my research work. I find that one James Ralston—the only great-great-grandson of the John Ralston of the ship's log—was shot as a traitor during the war. He sold valuable information to a person known to him to be a British spy.

EDYTHE (*nearly overcome*). Enough! Enough! Don't tell me any more.

CLIFTON. Shall I give you the report of the Van Derr line?

HENRY (*cheerfully*). Sure thing! By golly, Ma, I'll bet that there were not any worse crooks in my family than in yours.

EDYTHE (*faintly*). Let's hear what you have discovered. Perhaps for once Henry will save the day.

CLIFTON (*consulting his papers*). I find that in England in the first part of the seventeenth century there were only two male members of the Van Derr family living. The name, by the way, was then Vander. V-A-N-D-E-R. The present form seems to have been adopted at a rather recent date.

HENRY (*pointedly*). Quite recent.

CLIFTON. One of these brothers came to America —

EDYTHE (*again interested*). On the *Mayflower*?

CLIFTON. No, it was later. (*Studies paper a moment.*) In 1626.

EDYTHE. Well, it is nice to trace from there. (*With a sigh.*) Only six years late.

CLIFTON. But that brother never married, and he died soon after coming over.

EDYTHE (*disappointed*). Oh. And the other brother?

CLIFTON. He worked as a wool-sorter in Liverpool; and for several generations the Vanders were mill-workers, living in the poorest section of Liverpool. Finally, one of them ran away from home and came to America as a stowaway. That

stowaway, Mr. Van Derr, was your great-grandfather.

HENRY. By golly, I never knew that.

EDYTHE. Oh, I wish I didn't.

HENRY. What's the difference? I was readin' the other day that if George Washington had had a son, an' his blood had travelled on 'til now, the present Washington would be about one sixty-fourth George. That proportion o' blue blood in a colt wouldn't cause a Kentucky horse-breeder to fall on his knees in an attitude of adoration. For heaven's sake, quit wallowin' in the past, an' face the future, or the present.

EDYTHE. All my dreams go astray.

(She dabbles her handkerchief in her eyes.)

CLIFTON. I have something else which may interest you. Perhaps you have noticed in the Sunday edition of the *Review* that we are running an article each week on the ancestry of some prominent family. Your recent advent in the social set has made you quite prominent—I might say *very* prominent—in town —

EDYTHE (*graciously*). Yes. Yes.

CLIFTON. And the editor has asked me to write up your family.

EDYTHE. Oh, that is impossible. We must *never* let what you have told us get out. You won't print it, will you, Mr. Clifton?

HENRY. Why not? I'd just as soon show what we've risen to as what we've descended from.

CLIFTON. Well, Mrs. Van Derr, it places me in a peculiar position. We are paid very well for these articles, and I would be doing an injustice to my partners if I were to omit it.

EDYTHE. What is the usual payment you receive?

CLIFTON. About a thousand dollars an article. You see it is syndicated all over the country.

EDYTHE. We must stop it at any rate.

JOB THIRTEEN

(Goes to desk.)

HENRY. For a thousand dollars? No. Let 'em print anything they like.

EDYTHER (writing check). No. I couldn't hold my head up again if it were known. There, Mr. Clifton, that will fix things. (Hands him check.)

CLIFTON. Really, you don't know how I hate to do this, but out of fairness to my colleagues —

HENRY (sarcastically). Don't mention it—it's just a trifle.

EDYTHER. I am so disappointed at your discoveries, Mr. Clifton. I had so counted upon them. And I did want a family crest to turn up.

CLIFTON. Perhaps *that* can be arranged.

EDYTHER. How? If it only can! I *must* have a crest on my stationery; and I have a new chest of silver just crying for an emblem to be engraved; and the doors of the limousine must be adorned.

CLIFTON. On our staff we have a very fine artist who is well versed in heraldry, and for a nominal sum we can design a coat-of-arms equal to any seen in Europe.

HENRY. What d'ye know about that!

EDYTHER. I know that we are going to have a family crest just as pretty as those of any of the snobs we have fallen in with.

HENRY. It ought to have a skull and cross-bones on it, seein' as how your old ancestor was a sort of a pirate, and mine was a stowaway.

EDYTHER. Henry! (To CLIFTON.) How soon can you have one ready? I have a bridge party here next week, and would like it by then.

CLIFTON. I knew that you were very anxious to have one, and I have brought along one which I am sure you will like. But this was not designed by our artist. Here is a pencil sketch of it. (Takes up a small drawing.) It is a copy of the carving on a ring which was unearthed in Egypt last year. I have been saving it for someone who would appreciate it.

EDYTHE. How thrilling.

HENRY (*sarcastically*). How much extra?

EDYTHE. But probably many know all about it. Those expeditions publish detailed news of their discoveries, don't they?

CLIFTON. Ah, Mrs. Van Derr, a member of our association was with the expedition, and he picked the ring up and pocketed it unobserved. Perhaps Cleopatra herself wore the ring. Just think!

EDYTHE. We shall have it. We *must* have it.

HENRY. Easy. Every word you say is boosting the price fifty dollars, I'll bet.

CLIFTON. I can have a copy of it done in colors on parchment within a few days. And the rings you spoke of I have had carved, and I have them with me. (*Takes out a small box.*) One for yourself, one for your daughter, and a third for Mr. Van Derr.

HENRY. What the deuce is this all about?

CLIFTON. Mrs. Van Derr has a very novel idea. Each member of her family is to always wear a seal ring bearing the coat-of-arms of the family whenever he appears in public. It is splendid. The newspapers will make a great story of it.

HENRY. And have I got to cart one of those things around with me?

EDYTHE. Certainly. The Van Derr crest is going to rise like the Phoenix from old Egypt to conquer the city.

CLIFTON. It is an innovation which will certainly be copied by the best families.

EDYTHE (*with ring on finger*). Isn't that attractive? Mr. Clifton, I can never thank you. (*Opens check-book.*) How much in addition to your fee for the research is the crest and the rings?

CLIFTON (*slowly; sizing her up*). Well, for the drawings by our artist we generally get fifty dollars. But this, of course, is more expensive, as the cost of securing it was great.

EDYTHE (*agreeing*). Of course.

HENRY (*dryly*). Of course.

CLIFTON. The best that I can do is let it go for a hundred and fifty, including the rings, which are carved to match the original.

EDYTHE (*writing check*). Then the total affair is eleven hundred fifty, isn't it? The charge for the research was a thousand?

CLIFTON. That is correct.

HENRY. Oh, my ducats! My filthy lucre!

CLIFTON (*pocketing check*). Good-bye, Mrs. Van Derr. I trust that our services have been satisfactory.

EDYTHE. I am delighted. That terrible slave-beater was rather disconcerting; and Henry's mill-hands—ugh! (*Admires ring.*) But this is worth it all. Out of the land of Egypt!

CLIFTON. Good-bye, Mrs. Van Derr.

EDYTHE. Good-bye. Now be sure that that er—information does not get out, won't you?

CLIFTON. I shall immediately destroy my records of it. I am at your service any time.

(*Exit, c.*)

HENRY. I should think he would be. Do you realize that that slicker has walked out o' here with twenty-one hundred and fifty dollars of my good money? A thousand for a bunch of information that may or may not be true, and the rest for a lot o' worthless junk.

EDYTHE. Here; you put this on. (*Hands him ring.*)

HENRY. By golly, I won't.

EDYTHE. The ring that Cleopatra may have worn!

HENRY. If you'll give me one with a good American eagle on it, I won't kick. But as for this bunch o' worms and a one-legged buzzard—nothin' doin'.

(*Enter PROFESSOR SAISELLE and MARIANNE, R.*)

PROF. S. Ah, Mademoiselle, ze accent eet ees now so *Parisien, tres Parisien*.

MARIANNE. I am afraid that you are flattering me,—or trying to encourage me.

JOB THIRTEEN

PROF. S. *Non. Non.* Ah, here ees ze papa! Oh, Monsieur, you have ze clevailr daughter. Mademoiselle Marianne soon will speak ze *grande langue* as if she were ze native.

HENRY. And how soon will you speak ze English?

EDYTHE. Henry! (*To PROFESSOR SAISELLE.*) I am so delighted.

PROF. S. *Bon jour, Madame. Bon jour, Mademoiselle. Bon jour, Monsieur.*

(*He bows low to each as he speaks, and then backs out c., still bowing.*)

HENRY (*bowing after him*). So long, froggie. Marion, Mother has some jewelry for you.

EDYTHE. Yes. Here is the ring I was telling you about last night. I didn't expect to have them for some time, but Mr. Clifton surprised me. He is such a clever man.

HENRY. I should say so.

EDYTHE. All three of us are to wear our rings every time we step out of the house, and *always* when we have company.

HENRY. I won't wear it on the street, and I don't care for the kind of company you have here. I prefer human bein's.

MARIANNE. Please, Father. (*To him, aside.*) Just for a few days, and then we will get out of it somehow.

HENRY. Well, for you, Marion dear. (*He takes her by the shoulders.*) I'd do anything for you. (*Slips ring on his finger and gazes at it.*) They cost so darn much I s'pose we ought to use 'em a little.

EDYTHE. That sounds encouraging. Henry, sometimes I see a little glimmer of hope that you may be made over into a gentleman.

HENRY. You can thank Marion for any little glimmers you see. (*Bell rings off stage.*) That bell again! (*Glances at watch.*) That must be Dan

- back again. (*To EDYTHER.*) Or is it another of your endless procession of peace interrupters?
- EDYTHER. Daniel! What would he be doing back here? It is probably Count Egozzi.
- HENRY. An' what would *he* be doin' here?
- EDYTHER. He is to take Marianne and me for a motor ride.
- HENRY. Dan is goin' to take Marion for a flivver ride, an' there ain't goin' to be any *chappyron*.
- MARIANNE. Well, this is the first that I have heard of either arrangement.
- HENRY. Dan told me to tell you. He has to make a business trip a few miles out, in the tin Lizzie the company lets him run now, and he wants you to go along.
- EDYTHER. The Count invited us last evening, and I accepted.
- HENRY. Then *you* may go.
- EDYTHER. Marianne is going —
- HENRY (*interrupting*). —to choose for herself.
- EDYTHER (*to MARIANNE*). You will go with the Count, won't you?
- HENRY (*to MARIANNE*). Remember how faithful Dan has been to you.

(*Enter JAMES, c.*)

JAMES. Count Egozzi is calling.

EDYTHER. Show him in.

HENRY. Show him up, the old money-grabber.

EDYTHER. Well, Marianne, which is your choice, the Ford or the limousine?

HENRY. The Count of no account or a hustling young American? (*Enter COUNT EGOZZI, c., from the left. He is small in stature, partly bald, with a fringe of gray hair, and is about fifty years old. His attire is faultless, and he speaks the very exact English of a foreigner who has carefully mastered the language. HENRY, aside.*) That for a son-in-law! Oh-h-h-h!

COUNT. Good-morning, Mrs. Van Derr. (*He kisses*

her hand.) And my dear Marianne. *(He bows low to her.)* Ah, here is Mr. Van Derr also. *(Another bow.)* How charming you are this morning, Miss Marianne.

HENRY *(curtly)*. She always is.

COUNT. I have my car ready at the door.

(Bell rings, off stage.)

HENRY *(referring to the bell; EDYTHE thinks it is in reply to the COUNT's remark)*. Good!

COUNT. Which way shall we drive, Mrs. Van Derr?

EDYTHE. It makes no difference to me, Count. Just anywhere.

COUNT. Perhaps Miss Marianne will decide for us.

HENRY *(expectantly watching the door)*. She sure will.

DAN *(off stage)*. I know the way all right, James. *(Enter DAN, c.)* Well, here I am back again, Mr. Vander.

HENRY. And I'm mighty glad to see you just now. Count, I'd like you to meet Dan,—Dan Boggs. He's been keepin' comp'ny with Marion for quite a spell. *(The introductions are acknowledged. EDYTHE gasps "Henry!" and sinks into a chair at right, overcome with horror. HENRY promptly steps behind chair, lays one hand firmly on his wife's shoulder, and makes a pretense of smoothing her brow with the other.)* Count, I'm sorry, but Mrs. Vander has a severe pain in her head, and can't go with you this morning.

COUNT. Oh, I am genuinely sorry.

EDYTHE *(struggling to free herself)*. Henry, I am perfectly —

HENRY. There, there, my dear. Be quiet and you will soon be better. I'll get you some smellin' salts. Marion, ring for James, will you? *(She does so.)* Dan, Marion is all ready to attend to that business. *(He catches MARIANNE's eye, and speaks urgently.)* You had better start right along.

EDYTHER (*struggling, attempting to speak, but choking with rage*). Henry!

HENRY. You had better go *immediately*.

MARIANNE (*getting his idea*). Yes. Yes. Come along, Dan. We must hurry. It is important.

DAN (*bewildered*). What in the world is the matter?

HENRY (*industriously rubbing EDYTHER's forehead*).

Oh, nothin' much. She'll be all right soon.

MARIANNE. Good-bye, Count Egozzi.

(*She takes DAN by the hand and drags him along.*
Exeunt C. Enter JAMES, R.)

JAMES. Did you ring, sir?

HENRY. The Count is going.

COUNT. Yes. Yes. My dear Mrs. Van Derr, I am greatly grieved. I trust that your indisposition is nothing serious.

(*With a deep bow he takes leave and exits C., followed by JAMES. HENRY straightens up with a sigh of relief.*)

EDYTHER (*after several gasps*). How dared you! Henry Van Derr, how dared you!

HENRY (*quietly, with a puzzled air*). By golly, Edith, I don't know *how* I dared to! (*Pause.*) I guess it's 'cause I'm blessed if I'll see my daughter runnin' 'round with that foreigner when there's a good American like Dan around.

EDYTHER. Such treatment as that and you will have the dear Count frightened away; and then where will we be?

HENRY. Back to normalcy, as President Harding remarked.

EDYTHER. But think of having a count in the family!

HENRY. What's he good for? He's almost broke; and he hasn't got a trade. How is he goin' to support a wife?

EDYTHER. Don't be disgusting.

HENRY (*stubbornly*). He's makin' love to my money.

JOB THIRTEEN

I don't want the rotten stuff, but I'll be blowed if he gets any of it.

EDYTHE (*weeping*). I think that you do your best to crush all my social ambitions.

HENRY (*severely*). You make me tired with your "social ambitions," Edith. Just because I was unfortunate enough to have some money left to me you want to be the biggest fool of a bunch o' foolish women.

EDYTHE. Henry, don't you dare talk to me so!

HENRY. For six months I've suffered in silence, and now I'm goin' to have my say. And then I'm goin' to have my liberty. I'll walk when I want to; I'll eat what I want to; and I'll wear what I want to. In short, I'll be my own boss. And Marion will be hers.

EDYTHE. How dare you address your wife like that?

HENRY. I got my inspiration from one of your bloomin' English kings—the one James told me to read up—number eight.

EDYTHE (*shrilly*). Henry!

HENRY. I ain't had much schoolin', but when I was in school we didn't study stuff like that there "Burke's Peerage"—(*Pointing to table.*)—The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were more in my line. (*Goes to bookcase at left, looks along the volumes, spells "CLEV to EID" on back of one, takes it to table and opens it.*) And I don't forget 'em, either. Listen to this; it's from the Constitution of the United States. (*Reads.*) "Article One. Section Nine. No title of nobility shall be granted by the United States——" (*Closes book with a slam.*) I guess that the writers of that didn't expect that there would be bootleggers of family crests and auction sales of tin-horn titles in the days to come.

EDYTHE (*weakly*). Henry!

HENRY. You are like a doggone Chinaman in your ancestor worship, and I refuse to be. And the past is none of our business, but the future is up to us. Dan is goin' to make a future for himself,

JOB THIRTEEN

and Marion's goin' to choose the man to help her make hers; you're *not*.

EDYTHE. Henry, you never talked like this before.

HENRY. It took a lot of courage to do it. I've got something else to tell you. Listen to this: I've got a job. I start in to-morrow.

EDYTHE. This is terrible! Terrible!

HENRY. It's not much of a job, but it'll keep me from loafin' myself into a grave.

EDYTHE (*fearfully*). Wh-what is it?

HENRY. Messenger boy for the biggest jewelry store in town: Bigelow and Smith.

EDYTHE (*pleading*). No! No, you can't. All the people I hope to get in with trade there. You can't. I won't let you.

HENRY. Listen, Edith. I'm goin' to work; and Marion is goin' to marry Dan. I'm out after my rights, and I'll get 'em.

EDYTHE. You cannot upset my weeks and weeks of planning.

HENRY. Who will stop me?

EDYTHE (*again defiant*). I WILL!

HENRY (*calmly*). I've been readin' hist'ry, the way the butler advised me.

EDYTHE. Oh-h-h! The butler!

HENRY. About Henry the Eighth. You know that guy had six wives; three Catherines, two Annes and one Jane. (*Checking off on his fingers.*) One of 'em he divorced; he had the marriage with another annulled; one died after livin' with him a few years; *and two he had beheaded!* I've only got one wife to look after!

(EDYTHE swoons into a chair, and HENRY stands surprised at his own bravery as there is a

QUICK CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE I.—Office of ROBERT CUTTER; Wednesday morning. The entrance is an opaque glass panelled door, on which the reverse of the inscription "Robert Cutter, Insurance" is seen. The door opens directly into the public hallway of the building. The room is meagrely furnished, and has no air of prosperity. CUTTER'S desk and chair are placed diagonally R. C., and at the left of stage is a typewriter desk and chair. A hat-tree stands in the upper right corner. Three or four plain office chairs are placed about the room.

(CUTTER is at the telephone as the curtain rises. He is a crafty-looking man of about thirty-five, and is a sharp-spoken, suspicious individual. A huge black cigar, which he chews incessantly but never lights, protrudes from his mouth.)

CUTTER (at 'phone). I don't know who to get. Chicago Jim said that he would send someone if he could dig up a man, but he was pretty doubtful about it....Yes....Sure....Come around and we'll try to dope it out ourselves. G'-bye. (Hangs up.) A quarter of a million, perhaps; and no one handy to swing the deal.

(Enter GRACE KEENE, C. She is a clever woman, who can be refined or coarse, as she deems it best. She is rather attractive, and is eight or ten years younger than CUTTER.)

GRACE. Morning, chief slicker.

CUTTER (turning quickly). Shut up, Grace. Someone might be in the hall.

GRACE. Don't you worry. Has little Gracie ever pulled a boner since we teamed up?

CUTTER. No; of course not. But I'm a little nervous over this grand finale.

GRACE. It's needless. Everything is going as slick as a whistle.

CUTTER. I'll be glad when we're out of here.

GRACE. So will I. I'm sick of being a stenographer. (*Laughs.*) Last winter I was a guest at the Coronado; and now I have been a stenog for nearly four months.

CUTTER. Cheer up. We will work that hotel gag again in a few months. I guess it will be in Florida next time.

GRACE. Say, wouldn't insurance be a rotten game to work? Imagine staying in a dingy office week in and week out, year after year.

CUTTER. Now don't you begin to act up. We are going on one long, grand and glorious vacation, with plenty of money, pretty quick.

GRACE. Is everything all set?

CUTTER. Everything—except someone for this thirteenth job.

GRACE. I feel superstitious over this thirteen thing. I wish it had never bobbed up.

CUTTER (*with enthusiasm*). Think what it will add to the haul! This latest job will more than pay our expenses for arranging all the rest—and the rest will be all gravy. We'll dip our bread in gravy for one long while, kid, before we work again.

GRACE. I hope so. I'm sick of pounding this darned typewriter for the benefit of those in the next office.

CUTTER. We must make 'em think that this is a regular office with lots of business 'n' everything. Oh, I've just been talking to Harry over the 'phone. He can't seem to get hold of anyone to look after the inside work on job thirteen.

GRACE. Isn't there anyone left in Chicago?

CUTTER. No. We have cleaned that town out in order to swing this lot. Thirteen jobs at one swoop is some proposition.

JOB THIRTEEN

GRACE. Let's pass up this last one. It is only going to cause us a lot of trouble to get it figured out in time.

CUTTER. And pass up that lot of coin?

GRACE. We will have enough without it.

CUTTER. We can never have enough—while you wear clothes.

GRACE. Well, we can't swing this latest job unless we have another man, and where are we going to get him?

CUTTER. I don't know. If Chicago Jim can scare up one more man we will be all set. But we are going to do it *somehow*. When we were tipped off that that woman had ordered the Trust Company to send her seventy-five thousand in cold cash that added job thirteen to our list right off. We won't bother with any junk there; just the filthy lucre. Seventy-five thousand iron men! Think of it!

GRACE. It makes me dizzy. But how are we going to get inside dope on it?

CUTTER. I don't know. But, believe me, we are going to do it. Job thirteen is too big to get away from——

(A silhouette appears on the door, and the knob is turned. GRACE is seated so that she sees this and she promptly interrupts CUTTER.)

GRACE *(in a warning tone)*. Mr. Cutter, the physician's report on applicant thirteen hundred thirteen is here.

(The door opens and HENRY enters, carrying a small package.)

CUTTER *(rustling the papers on his desk)*. Good. The applicant will be in this morning.

HENRY. Is Mr. Robert Cutter here?

CUTTER. Right here.

(Between speeches GRACE works the typewriter industriously. She listens to the conversation.)

JOB THIRTEEN

HENRY. I am from Bigelow and Smith. Here is a package for you.

CUTTER. Oh, yes. A watch I left to be repaired.

(HENRY hands over the package, and draws receipt book and pen from his pocket.)

HENRY (*pointing with right hand*). Will you kindly sign the receipt here?

(CUTTER takes pen, then starts violently and gazes at the ring on HENRY's finger.)

CUTTER (*with suppressed excitement*). Why, what a peculiar ring, man. Where did you get it?

HENRY (*with a groan*). Shade of Cleopatra! That ring again!

(GRACE turns suddenly around in her chair.)

GRACE. What?

CUTTER. At last! (*Shaking HENRY's hand vigorously*.) Man, you don't know how glad I am to see you.

HENRY (*confused*). I don't understand you. I am a messenger from Bigelow and Smith's.

CUTTER. You are a good actor, my comrade; but you may speak out now. You have identified yourself—the password—"Shade of Cleopatra." Now, so that you may be assured that you speak to one of the syndicate I reply—"Shade of Marc Antony."

HENRY. What are you talkin' about?

CUTTER. Aren't you convinced by my answer to your password that we are O. K.? This will prove it. (*Takes ring from vest pocket and holds it beside HENRY's ring*.) See. It is identical.

HENRY (*surprised*). So it is!

GRACE. And look here.

(*She pulls a gold chain which is around her neck, and reveals a ring which was concealed in her clothing*.)

JOB THIRTEEN

HENRY (*interested*). The same!

CUTTER. Now are you convinced?

HENRY (*cautiously*). How can I help bein'?

GRACE. You are a sight for tired eyes. Now number thirteen will go over in great shape.

HENRY. Number thirteen?

CUTTER. I don't suppose that Chicago Jim told you anything?

HENRY. Chicago Jim? (*Slowly*.) No, not a thing.

CUTTER. Except to come here.

HENRY (*his curiosity aroused*). Oh, that, of course.

CUTTER. What name do you wish to assume while working this city?

HENRY (*half to himself*). So I join the rest of the family and change my name!

GRACE. Certainly. We must leave the city without a clue behind us.

HENRY. Of course. Of course. Call me—call me Landry. (*Glances at ring*.) And never mind my ancestry. (*Laughs*.)

CUTTER. Very well,—Landry. (*He puts his ring in pocket. To GRACE.*) Tuck that ring away, Grace. (*She does*.)

HENRY (*wondering what it is all about, and determined to find out*). I suppose that I had better put mine away, now that it has done its work.

CUTTER. Yes. We don't want them to be too commonly seen. (*HENRY pockets his ring*.) Well, how do you like our layout? Some insurance people, huh? (*Laughs*.) I wouldn't know how to make out a policy insuring the Atlantic Ocean against fire. Oh, Landry, this is the wife, known here as Miss Keene, my stenog.

(GRACE and HENRY exchange greetings.)

GRACE. You don't know how welcome you are just now.

CUTTER. Oh, by the way, I had word yesterday that after the first of the month we are to have new rings—a new design, I mean.

HENRY (*blankly*). Is that so?

CUTTER. You see, last year when we relieved that Indian Mail steamer of the big gold shipment when she was going through the Suez Canal, the boys had to run all over Egypt to evade the authorities—that was the closest call we have ever had,—and one of these rings was lost.

HENRY (*eagerly*). In Egypt, you say?

CUTTER. Yes. That venture gave rise to our password of the year—"Shade of Cleopatra."

HENRY. Well, ain't that rich!

CUTTER. It is unique, at any rate. Lately we have talked it over and decided that perhaps we had better change our emblem of recognition. There is always a bare possibility that someone might find that ring in Egypt, and as the world is a pretty small place, we might unwittingly welcome a stranger within our fold; hence the change.

HENRY. It is an excellent idea. (*With a laugh.*) We don't want any strangers among us, do we?

CUTTER. Ye gods, man! Don't speak so lightly at a critical time like this.

GRACE. Thirteen jobs framed. Nothing must go wrong.

HENRY. Absolutely nothing. (*Feeling his way.*) Chicago Jim wasn't—er, wasn't very definite,—before I left. Just what is job thirteen?

CUTTER. We had twelve of the best jobs ever pulled arranged for next Friday. Everything all set. Inside people on every job. We were absolutely sure of cleaning up at least a quarter of a million—mostly cash, and the rest easily negotiable.

HENRY (*awed*). By golly!

CUTTER. And then we got wind of something that we must put over. A job that will net us perhaps half again what we will get from all the rest.

GRACE (*fervently*). If we can only put it over!

CUTTER. Sure we can. (*Indicating HENRY.*) Here is the man to do it.

HENRY. Wh-what? (*Nervously.*) Yes, here I am. Let's—let's hear about job thirteen.

JOB THIRTEEN

CUTTER. As I said, we were all set for our twelve jobs, when one of our men who has been a janitor at the Trust Company brought us the info. that some woman had given the bank notice to deliver her seventy-five thousand dollars on the day of our big play, and, queerly enough, she wanted it in cash. (HENRY gives a whistle of surprise.) You have got to get that money!

HENRY (startled). Wh-what!

CUTTER. We were desperate for another man to look after that, and you have come in the nick of time.

HENRY (dazed). How can I do it?

CUTTER. You must have pulled some pretty big jobs in the past, or Chicago Jim would not have sent you. You can dope this one out.

HENRY. Where must I—er, pull off this job?

CUTTER (writes on slip and hands it to HENRY). Here you are. Name and address of victim thirteen.

HENRY (reads; amazed). Henry Van Derr, 1320 Riverview Boulevard!! Is that the place I am to rob?

CUTTER (complacently). That is job thirteen.

(HENRY is speechless; he struggles to show no surprise, and thinks intently. Finally a look of triumph lights his face. He speaks slowly and calmly.)

HENRY. I guess I can manage it. (Pause. Then slowly, as he thinks out his plan.) By the way, Cutter, perhaps you would like to know who I really am.

CUTTER. The name Landry will do.

HENRY (takes card-case from pocket). No. Have a card. (He hands one over.)

CUTTER (reads and starts suddenly). Henry Van Derr! (Quickly opens desk and takes out revolver.) See here, what kind of a game is this? Where did you get this card?

JOB THIRTEEN

(GRACE runs to door and locks it.)

HENRY. Don't get excited.

CUTTER. Who the devil are you?

HENRY. A member of the—the syndicate.

CUTTER. I don't know whether you are or not.

HENRY. Didn't I give you the proper password,—
and haven't I shown the ring? Didn't Chicago
Jim send me?

GRACE. I should hope so!

CUTTER. But where did you get those cards?

HENRY (*playing for time in which to think*). Do you
know anything about these Van Derrs?

CUTTER. Just what I've been able to learn since yesterday when we got word from the man at the bank. I can't find out much except that they loomed up on the social horizon a short time ago; and that they are well off.

HENRY. You have never seen 'em?

CUTTER. Wouldn't know one of 'em if I was talking right to him.

HENRY. Is that so? I'm about to tell you the wildest tale you've ever heard.

CUTTER. Shoot it. Gee, you're a mystery. (*Scratches his head.*) But you must be all right. That ring and the password have been carefully guarded.

HENRY. When did you see Chicago Jim last?

CUTTER. Not for about three months. He's busy fixing something for the Western crowd.

HENRY. Well, some months ago, he stumbled across the fact that Mrs. Van Derr, my wife —

CUTTER (*gripping revolver nervously*). Man, what do you mean?

HENRY. Give me time to tell you. —That *she* had been left somewhere around half a million; and next he found out that her husband had disappeared some years ago, and never been heard from. (*He pauses and takes a long breath.*) The long and the short of it is that—that Chicago Jim, playin' up as a lawyer, convinced Mrs. Van Derr that *I* was her long-lost husband. (*Watch-*

JOB THIRTEEN

ing them closely.) I have been livin' in her home three months as a—a sort o' returned prodigal,—and waitin' for a chance to make a rich getaway.

CUTTER (*with amazement*). Is that true?

GRACE. You're not spoofing us?

HENRY (*replying to CUTTER*). It is! (*Wiping his brow.*) I've sure had one uncomfortable time livin' on the Boulevard,—and *that's* no lie.

CUTTER. Well, if this isn't luck.

GRACE. We must notify Jim that the Van Derr coin is our thirteenth job.

HENRY (*earnestly*). No! Let's surprise him. Wait until you report the success of the other—er—jobs.

CUTTER. All right.

HENRY (*with a sigh of relief*). Fine! I can tell you something else to interest you.

GRACE. Well?

HENRY. There will be much more than seventy-five thousand in cash on hand next Friday.

CUTTER. You can fix that?

HENRY. Well, it's a mite hard to handle the old lady, but I'll do the best I can.

CUTTER (*unwrapping watch*). Say, how do you explain this? Why is the *husband* of the wealthy Mrs. Van Derr running errands for Bigelow and Smith?

HENRY. By golly, I didn't explain that, did I? (*Meditatively.*) Let me see how I can—the quickest way. (*Explaining.*) I got this job some time ago. Jim supplied me with references.

CUTTER. But what does your wife say about it?

HENRY. I've had a hard time keepin' the news from my wife, but I've done it.

CUTTER. But what's the idea of such a munificent position?

HENRY. The day we blow with the Van Derr coin, I am to see to it that my missus—ahem!—has a terrific amount o' junk sent home for inspection. And—er—I will be assigned to carry it up, and we will just add that to our collection, see?

JOB THIRTEEN

CUTTER. This is immense. The biggest clean-up we have ever made.

GRACE. You will excuse our suspicions. Now that we have talked it over, we know that you are all right.

HENRY. Oh, do you? I'm glad of that.

CUTTER. We have to work cautiously.

GRACE. Thank goodness, everything is all set for Friday.

HENRY. Friday, is it?

CUTTER. Friday, and the thirteenth job.

HENRY. I always said that half a million was too much money for the Van Derr family. We'll clean 'em out. (*With sudden inspiration.*) By golly, I've got it. There can be two of us on the inside. (*To GRACE.*) My wife has been wantin' a French maid. Can you be one?

GRACE (*dropping a curtsy*). *Oui, Monsieur!*

HENRY. You're hired. Report at my mansion this afternoon.

CURTAIN

SCENE II.—*Same as ACT I. Wednesday afternoon.*

(*HENRY and JAMES are discovered.*)

HENRY. By golly, George, I never lied so fast in my life.

JAMES. Hi can believe you.

HENRY. I don't know how I stumbled on to their password. There had been so much talk about Egypt and Cleopatra 'round here since those old rings came that I guess I just naturally said "Shade of Cleopatra."

JAMES. Hit sounds himpossible.

HENRY. They started in the minute they saw that fool ring, and before I knew what was bein' done I was roped in as a pal o' them crooks, and was lyin' faster 'n a horse can trot to keep in good with them.

JOB THIRTEEN

JAMES. 'Adn't you better put the ring back hon your finger before Mrs. Van Derr discovers it is hoff?

HENRY. Yes, I guess I had. (*Places it on finger.*) But I can't wear it long; and I must get hold of my wife's ring, and Marion's, too, before long. I'll explain why later.

JAMES. You say that they are to attempt to carry out their plan on Friday?

HENRY. Yes. It seems that they have been layin' elaborate plans for the last three or four months. They have headquarters down-town all rigged up as an insurance office. Next Friday twelve of the wealthiest homes in the city are to be robbed, and this will make the thirteenth.

JAMES. 'Ow fortunate that you accepted that position.

HENRY. The job at Bigelow and Smith's? Yes. And how lucky that the missus had that ring idea.

JAMES. What a coincidence! One ring lost over a year ago in Egypt brings about all this. Just think! It will save thirteen homes from being robbed.

HENRY. There, my dear George, is where you are *all wrong*.

JAMES. What do you mean?

HENRY. I mean that on next Friday the Van Derr fortune will take leave of these premises.

JAMES. My word!

HENRY (*arm around JAMES' shoulder*). To-day I have become an honored member of the International Wealth Syndicate. (*EDYTHE enters c. and hears his next remark.*) The password is "Shade of Cleopatra."

EDYTHE (*sternly*). James, you may go!

JAMES. Yes, Madame.

(*With great dignity he exits c.*)

EDYTHE. Henry, that ends it.

HENRY. What?

EDYTHER. James' services.

HENRY. No. No.

EDYTHER. Yes, *I* say. His month ends Friday, and he is going then. You may inform him.

HENRY (*with a sigh of relief*). Oh, that's all right, if he will be here 'til Friday.

EDYTHER. You are a disgrace to the family, chatting so with the servants. And acting as a messenger boy for a store. What were you talking to James about? What was that Cleopatra business?

HENRY. Oh, nothin' at all.

EDYTHER. I won't have things going on behind my back. Out with it.

HENRY. Well, dear, I—er—you—er—we ——— (*With inspiration.*) You have wished so much lately that you had a French maid that I—I stopped in at the agency on my way home, and bought one—I mean hired one.

EDYTHER (*beaming*). Oh, Henry!

HENRY. And—and her name is Cleopatra!

EDYTHER. You dear boy. I believe that you are coming to your senses. Cleopatra! I shall call her Cleo. That sounds real Frenchy.

HENRY. She'll be here pretty soon.

EDYTHER. She shall serve my breakfast in bed to-morrow.

HENRY. Edith, how would you like a nice summer estate at the seashore?

EDYTHER (*staring in amazement*). Henry, are you crazy?

HENRY. Well, we might as well enjoy livin'. Look at the money we still have in spite of your spending. Now I have got wind of a nice place in Plymouth County, Massachusetts, that has acres and acres of land, and also has the ruins of an old block-house those Pilgrim fellers used to fight the Indians with.

EDYTHER. Plymouth County! Historic ruins! We *must* have those ruins at any price.

HENRY. The price is kinda steep, Mother.

EDYTHER. We will fill the house with expensive an-

tiques and call it the Pilgrimage,—Pilgrim Age, see? And every summer we will make a pilgrimage to Plymouth County to do honor to those brave souls of three hundred years ago,—and to meet all the biggest people we can get acquainted with.

HENRY. What a quick thinker you are.

EDYTHER. It runs in my family.

HENRY (*absent-mindedly*). After this mornin' I guess it runs in my side, too.

EDYTHER. What do you mean?

HENRY. Why—er—er—I mean the dicker I made with the feller who owns it. It's really a bargain, but it's pretty steep at that.

EDYTHER. How much?

HENRY (*with a gulp*). Only one hundred thousand dollars.

EDYTHER (*with a gasp*). Oh, Henry!

HENRY. Can we do it?

EDYTHER (*thoughtfully*). That ruined block-house. The "Pilgrim Age." Henry, we *must* do it!

HENRY (*elated*). Fine. I must close the deal Friday evening. Now you go to the bank in the mornin' and tell them to send the money up here in *cash* Friday just before the bank closes.

EDYTHER. A hundred thousand in cash?

HENRY. Yes. Big bills. They are too nosey at that bank about what you do with your money—always want to invest it for you—so I don't want 'em to have any cancelled checks as clues to *our* business; it's none o' theirs.

EDYTHER. All right, I'll attend to it. I have a little pocket money being sent up Friday, too.

HENRY (*aside*). Seventy-five thousand pocket money! (*To EDYTHER.*) And say, I wish you'd bring up all the negotiable stuff there is in the vault,—all those unregistered bonds and stuff.

EDYTHER. Henry, I do believe that you are beginning to take an interest in your financial affairs.

HENRY. I want to look everything over Friday. Will you bring 'em?

JOB THIRTEEN

EDYTHER. Yes, I'll do anything for you since you have told me about those ruins of the Pilgrims. (*In a wheedling tone.*) Oh, Henry, will you do something for me?

HENRY (*suspiciously*). What d'ye want?

EDYTHER. Will you kindly resign your—your—er—position?

HENRY. I'll think it over and let you know Friday.

EDYTHER. I believe you will! Well, I must run upstairs and write some notes; got two invitations to real *recherché* affairs to-day.

HENRY. Huh?

EDYTHER. Oh, Henry, I am so happy to know that at last you are beginning to catch on to things.

(*Exit c.*)

HENRY. Yeh. There's goin' to be considerable catchin' on to things around here.

(*He impatiently rings electric bell, pushing the button several times. After a pause JAMES enters c.*)

JAMES. Did you ring, sir?

HENRY. No, I was just exercising my thumb and it hit the bell by accident. I want to finish explaining things to you. Let me see, where did we leave off when my wife interrupted?

JAMES. You had just declared your intention of helping the robbers. Really, I was surprised, sir.

HENRY. Don't "sir" me. How many times must I tell you? And from now 'til Friday we are pals.

JAMES. Why, really, you don't expect me to join the robber persons, do you?

HENRY. Yes, I do, to some extent.

JAMES. Really, Hi don't——

HENRY. Now listen to me. Of course I haven't really joined that gang—only partly. I'm only one-thirteenth as bad as they are, for I am only goin' to help in one job, and only share in the benefits of one.

JAMES (*awed*). And whose 'ome do you rob?

JOB THIRTEEN

HENRY. My own.

JAMES. Are you in your right mind, sir?

HENRY. I was never more so. See here, George, you have got me all wrong. I am going to give the police complete information on twelve of the jobs, just as soon as I can get it, so that there will be a warm reception for that phoney insurance man and his outfit. But the police are not to know of the plan to clean up this place.

JAMES. And why not?

HENRY. Because my happiness an' peace o' mind, and that o' my daughter an' Dan Boggs, depend upon my wife bein' penniless—or 'most so.

JAMES. And you are going to let your wealth be stolen?

HENRY. So far as my wife is concerned. That darned money is an awful trouble maker, so if we can get her to think that it is stolen, that we are dead broke, we will be back where we started. Then I'll get me a job, and I can have my pay accordin' to what I think best—for I'll stow this money away where she won't know anything about it, and I can draw on it to regulate the happiness an' comfort of all concerned.

JAMES. 'Ow will you get 'old of the money?

HENRY. I have fixed it so that about all we own will be in the house Friday, and we will figure out before then the best way to get away with it.

JAMES. Hit sounds simple.

HENRY. Here's the hitch. In order to get all the dope I need for the police, I have arranged for that insurance guy's wife to come here as a maid to Mrs. Vander. She's a slick one, an' we'll have to watch out that she doesn't really get away with the stuff.

JAMES. And Hi must associate with a—a crook masquerading as an honest lady's maid! What low company!

HENRY. Perhaps a little present of a hundred dollars will help you stand the degradin' company until Friday.

JOB THIRTEEN

JAMES. Thank you. I'll stand it somehow.

HENRY. I'll tell you what to do from time to time. To begin with, as soon as this here combination maid and crook comes, you must be very cordial to her. And don't forget to gossip. Tell her all about the long lost husband's return and how bad his mem'ry was on things he ought to know, et cetera, so 's she'll swallow the story I made up for 'em.

JAMES (*slapping HENRY on the back*). I'll do the best I can to earn the hundred, old top. (*Enter EDYTHE, c. JAMES, formally; seeing her.*) I shall do my best, sir.

(*Exit c.*)

EDYTHE. Oh, Henry, you will dress for dinner tonight, won't you?

HENRY. You mean put on that hack driver's outfit for supper? (*Carelessly.*) All right, if you say so.

EDYTHE. My dear, what has changed you so lately?

(*Enter JAMES, c.*)

JAMES. Your maid has arrived, Madame.

EDYTHE. Send her in. (*To HENRY.*) Oh, Henry, you were a perfect jewel to get me a maid—and a French one, too.

(*Enter GRACE, c., in street costume.*)

GRACE. Madame Van Derr? I am ze maid Monsieur has engage zis aftairnoon. My name ees Suzanne.

EDYTHE (*to HENRY*). You told me her name was Cleopatra. (*To GRACE.*) Did you say Suzanne?

(*HENRY wildly signals to GRACE, as his wife turns to her. She comprehends.*)

GRACE. Oh, ze full name ees Cleopatra Suzanne Gaudet. My las' meestress dislike Cleopatra, so she call me Suzanne.

JOB THIRTEEN

(HENRY *wipes his brow in relief.*)

EDYTHER. I much prefer Cleopatra. I have already decided that we shall call you Cleo.

GRACE. Verr good, Madame.

EDYTHER (*rings bell*). I will have James show you to your room.

HENRY. Cleo had most excellent references.

EDYTHER. I know she is dependable. Her face is so honest. (HENRY *winks at* GRACE. *Enter* JAMES, c., *very pompously.*) James, you will show Cleo to her room.

HENRY. James, this is the latest addition to our household, Cleopatra.

(JAMES *winks at* HENRY, *and bows low before* GRACE *as he speaks.*)

JAMES. Cleopatra, your Marc Antony greets you!

(GRACE *winks at* HENRY *over the bowing* JAMES.)

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE.—*Same as ACT I. Friday.*

(GRACE is dusting the furniture. JAMES critically looks on.)

JAMES. Now don't slight any of the bric-à-brac.

GRACE. I would lov' to smash eet. I did not expect to do zis when ze job he com' to me.

JAMES. Hit's good exercise. Well, I must toddle along.

GRACE. Oh, James, you hav' not tol' me—was Madame glad to see Monsieur?

JAMES. At first she wept copiously, and then she gave 'im a terrible tongue lashing.

GRACE. *Mon Dieu!* Such a tongue she has!

JAMES. Well I know it! Do you know, Cleo, 'e was most forgetful of some hincidents that 'appened before 'e went away.

GRACE. You have worked for ze family before he go away?

JAMES. No. (*Scornfully.*) They are some get-rich-quicks. Six months ago she 'ad nothing; not even an 'usband—at least she didn't know where 'e was. Someone left 'er a comfortable fortune, and soon after 'er 'usband returned.

GRACE. To see ze wife or ze money? Eh?

JAMES. Ah, you get the idea. Would 'e 'ave come back for the wife alone?

GRACE. *Sacre!* I would nevair wish so naughty a wife for any man.

JAMES. Neither would I. (*With a deep sigh.*) I 'ave 'ad a terrible time these past six months. But I leave to-day. (*Another sigh.*) 'Ired hon a Friday; fired hon a Friday! Hi shall be glad when the day is over.

JOB THIRTEEN

GRACE (*half to herself*). I, too, will be verr glad to see zis day end.

JAMES (*watching her closely*). Why?

GRACE (*with a shrug*). I cannot put it in words. I am verr superstitious about Friday.

JAMES. Well, Cleo, *ma chérie*, Friday will soon be a thing of the past. I shall enjoy a vacation.

GRACE. I am going on a long one, too, verr soon.

JAMES. But you 'ave just come 'ere.

GRACE. I shall not care to stay verr long. When one has heard all ze family affairs eet ees time to look for ze new place and ze new scandals. Ze Van Derrs have been somebody only these six month. Before that they were nobodies. You have tol' me all there is to know in two days. Eet ees good that I go soon.

JAMES. Hi must go now and deliver a message to François.

GRACE. *Sacre!* A Greek called François! Eet ees too terrible. He should not run ze motor car, but ze restaurant.

(Bell rings off stage.)

JAMES. There's the bell. Au revoir, Frenchy.

(Exit JAMES, c.)

GRACE. Au revoir, Jimmie. Gee whiz, I'll be glad when I can talk United States again. That bloomin' Henglishman has talked me almost to death. I wonder if that's Landry who just rang. It's time for him. Boy, won't we clean up to-day!

(Enter HENRY, c.)

HENRY. Hello, Cleo. (*In a low voice.*) Anyone around?

GRACE. No. The coast is clear. Did you bring up the jewelry for your honored wife to look over?

HENRY. About half the stock of Bigelow and Smith.

GRACE. Where is it?

JOB THIRTEEN

HENRY. James has taken it to my room. It's all in a suit-box. I told him it was a couple of new shirts.

GRACE. Everything seems to be O. K.

HENRY. Everything. What's the news from Cutter?

GRACE. All the stuff is to be mailed to him to-night, addressed to him as Insurance Broker. I will send what we get from the little postal station around the corner. He has been sending himself packages for two weeks, so that the postman won't suspect anything at a sudden rush of mail. Ours is to be mailed here in the city; the others will send theirs from surrounding towns. Every little detail has been planned.

HENRY. There is no possibility of a slip-up.

GRACE. The plans are the most perfect that we have ever laid. The police will be paralyzed when thirteen reports of theft are turned in. They won't know how to make headway with all those cases.

HENRY. And that's where the get-away comes in.

GRACE. Here's the dope on the get-away. Those on the inside are to stay at their jobs for varying lengths of time, and leave the city one by one. You see the advantage of not knowing all the members of the outfit. Of course the bulls will give all the servants of these robbed joints the third degree, and as we don't know which one of Mrs. Gold-brick's servants—for instance—is in with us, there won't be any chance of our giving anything away by word or look, even if they should round up all the servants at the station-house.

HENRY. It's a great system, all right.

GRACE. Has the money arrived from the bank yet?

HENRY. No. It was to be sent up just at closing time, so it should be here at any time now.

(Enter JAMES, c., with telegram.)

JAMES. A telegram for you, sir.

JOB THIRTEEN

HENRY. All right. (*Winks at JAMES, who returns it and then exits C. HENRY opens telegram and reads it. To GRACE.*) Listen. (*Reads.*) Dutiful husband to stay on job three weeks after goods are shipped. Signed, Jim.

GRACE. Then you are not to blow for three weeks. Poor Landry. Can you stand *that woman* three weeks longer?

HENRY. It's an age, but I'll do my best.

GRACE. There is something else we can add to the haul.

HENRY. What?

GRACE. Your *wife*—get that —?

HENRY. Yes. I've got her, all right.

GRACE. —Is going to the opera to-night, and I have convinced her that the gown she is to wear will look better with very little jewelry; so milady's jewel casket will be well laden,—and it just fits my hand-bag.

HENRY. Let's plan to take the house right off its foundation.

GRACE. You slip me the money as soon as it arrives, and I'll do everything up and have it ready to mail.

HENRY. All right.

GRACE. I must beat it now.

(*EDYTHER appears in door, C., but is unnoticed.*)

HENRY (*bowing low over GRACE's hand*). I bid you a fond au revoir, Cleopatra, Queen of the Smile.

GRACE. My Marc Antony, adieu! I wonder if the old boy was an *easy* Marc! (*Sees EDYTHER.*) Oh, oh, Monsieur!

(*She hurriedly exits R.*)

HENRY. Hey, Cleo, what's the idea?

EDYTHER. That is exactly what I wish to know!

HENRY (*startled*). Oh! Are you here, my dear?

EDYTHER. I most certainly am. I came! I saw! I heard! Now you *explain* if you can.

HENRY. What is there to explain?

EDYTHER. You are carrying on most shamefully, Henry. The more servants we have the worse you become. Cleo has been here just two days, and already you are treating her as one of the family. You are *impossible* on the servant question.

HENRY. Don't be so fussy.

EDYTHER (*reproachfully*). I thought that you were improving in the matter. You have treated James as becomes his station the last two days; but now I see it was only that you have transferred your attention to Cleo.

HENRY. Yes; it was only on account of the girl. I didn't want her to think that I was familiar with the other servants.

EDYTHER. You brazen thing!

HENRY. Now be careful. If you get your temper up, I will send that money back to the bank, and you will go without your old Massachusetts ruins.

EDYTHER. Oh, Henry! I don't mean to scold. If only you were not so—so *playful* with the servants.

HENRY. I'll try not to be—after to-day.

EDYTHER. Henry, dear, Marianne and I are going to dinner with Count Egozzi to-night, and then to the opera. This afternoon we are going autoing with him.

HENRY. You're not rushin' the Count, are you?

EDYTHER. He should be here very soon.

HENRY. I don't suppose I can stop him from comin'.

EDYTHER. The Count intends to speak to you this afternoon.

HENRY. Then I'll speak to him.

EDYTHER. You don't understand. He is going to ask you for Marianne's hand.

HENRY. Well, he's got his nerve. Let him ask her. I'm not sellin' slaves.

EDYTHER. But the dear Count says that in his country it is customary to consult the parents before speaking to the girl.

JOB THIRTEEN

HENRY. Marion has plenty o' good common sense, and it's entirely up to her.

EDYTHE. You tell that to the Count, then. But don't do it in an insulting way. I'll talk Marianne into saying "Yes" to him. Henry! I think that it's the queerest thing about those rings. They haven't turned up yet. Missing two days. You don't suppose Cleo took them, do you?

HENRY. Cleo? She is as honest as the day is long. What would she want of that worthless junk when all the other stuff is lying around? Haven't missed anything else, have you?

EDYTHE. No.

HENRY (*with a studied carelessness*). They'll turn up somewhere.

EDYTHE. I hope so. I don't suppose that we could drag you to the opera, could we?

HENRY. Not with a team of wild horses.

EDYTHE. You are slowly improving. Soon you will reach the opera stage. I will give the cook orders about your dinner.

(*Exit R.*)

(HENRY rings bell for JAMES, and impatiently paces back and forth while waiting for him. Enter JAMES.)

JAMES. 'Ere Hi am, old topper.

HENRY. Things are getting near the breaking point. We have got to be darned careful that friend Cleo doesn't light out with some o' the stuff. She has her eye on my wife's jewelry now.

JAMES. Oh, she won't get anything. And the minute that money comes from the bank Hi shall make a duplicate package.

HENRY. Cleo fell for the telegram I sent myself.

JAMES. We'll put it over, old thing.

(*Slaps HENRY's shoulder.*)

HENRY. By golly, I like you, George. Say, after I

rob myself, what do you say if you teach me to buttle, an' we'll get a job together in some nice, quiet place?

JAMES (*with great dignity*). You 'ave to be born to hit. My father and my grandfather hand me great-grandfather were in the service of the same family. (*Proudly.*) Yes. One must be born to hit.

HENRY. I'm sure of my old job as foreman at the fact'ry, anyhow. (*Suddenly.*) Say, I feel a little nervous about Cleo and those jewels. Suppose she gets 'em? How am I goin' to stop her from runnin' off with 'em?

JAMES. Now don't worry. The moment the money comes Hi shall make up that duplicate package, and 'ide the real stuff hin the coal-bin; hand Hi shall get the jewelry somehow. (*Enter MARIANNE, C. JAMES sees her, and stands at attention.*) Yes, sir. Hi shall hattend to hit himmedately, sir.

(*Exit c.*)

MARIANNE. Father, can't I give those rings back to Mother now? She is frantic. Count Egozzi is coming soon, and Mother *must* have those rings.

HENRY. No. No. She *mustn't*.

MARIANNE. What made you think of torturing Mother that way? You know how important those rings are to her peace of mind.

HENRY. She can have 'em to-morrow.

MARIANNE. But the Count is coming this afternoon; and it was for his especial benefit that they were bought.

HENRY. You don't care if he doesn't see 'em, do you? (*Seriously.*) Marion, you haven't canned Dan for the tin-horn Count of no account, have you?

MARIANNE. Don't you worry about Dan, Father. I can handle the Count, all right.

HENRY. That's what I told your mother. But don't let her have her say too loud; she might help old down and out to kidnap you.

JOB THIRTEEN

MARIANNE. Don't you worry. I'd—I'd run away before I'd be kidnapped.

HENRY. There's so much stealin' goin' on in town lately that I thought the Count might catch the fever. (*Proudly.*) By golly, I feel sorry for the "bally beggar," just the same, because he can't have you.

MARIANNE. You old silly. (*Kisses him.*) Well, I must run along and sympathize with Mother over the loss of those rings.

HENRY. You can give 'em back to her in the mornin'. My little joke will be over then.

MARIANNE. All right.

(*Exit C. Enter GRACE, R. She is excited.*)

GRACE. Landry, do you know that there is a thief in the house?

HENRY. Two of 'em. Let's look in the mirror and see 'em.

GRACE. I don't mean us.

HENRY. What! Who?

GRACE. James!

HENRY. No!

GRACE. Yes. I was sneaking into Mrs. Van Derr's room to get that jewelry and I closed the door behind me. Just as I was reaching for the stuff I heard someone at the door. I hid in the closet. Then I saw James come in, and he cleaned out that dressing-table in a jiffy.

HENRY. Did he see you?

GRACE. No.

HENRY. Then keep quiet about it. We will get the stuff back by-and-by.

GRACE. The dirty crook!

HENRY. Keep mum about it. Now get out of here before my wife catches me talkin' to you, or I'll be in hot water.

(*Exit GRACE, C. HENRY is elated. He runs to bell and rings. At the instant he presses the button JAMES pops his head in door R.*)

JOB THIRTEEN

JAMES. Psst!

HENRY. You're prompt!

JAMES (*in a whisper*). Are you alone?

HENRY. Alone as an alligator at the North Pole.

JAMES (*coming into room. His pockets are bulging*).

Where shall Hi put this stuff?

(*He takes several articles of a silver toilet set from his pockets and then various pieces of jewelry.*)

HENRY. Yes, that is the question.

JAMES. We must save it.

HENRY. I'll say so.

JAMES. Hit was a narrow hescape. She saw me take hit! Hi couldn't 'elp hit.

HENRY. That's all right. She told me, and I've fixed it for the time bein'.

JAMES. Hi saw Cleo sneaking hinto the room. As soon as she closed the door, Hi rattled the knob, gave 'er time to 'ide, hand then went hin hand gathered these hup. (*With a moan.*) Hand then she saw me!

HENRY. I've fixed it, I tell you.

EDYTHE (*off stage, at a distance; in a shrill, excited voice*). Henry! Oh, Henry!

JAMES (*terror stricken*). There she comes!

HENRY. Why, that's my wife.

JAMES. Don't Hi know it? Oh, she saw me!

HENRY. *My wife?*

JAMES (*looking wildly about*). Yes. Yes.

HENRY. Ye gods! I thought that you meant Cleo.

EDYTHE (*off stage, nearer*). Oh, Henry!

JAMES. What shall Hi do?

(*Dances around with the toilet articles.*)

HENRY. Quick, put it all in the coal-bin.

(*Exit JAMES, c., on the run.*)

EDYTHE (*as she rushes in*). Do you know that there is a thief in the house?

HENRY. Yes—er—I mean —

JOB THIRTEEN

EDYTHE. *What?* You know it?

HENRY. Your rings disappeared, didn't they?

EDYTHE. And I know who took them.

HENRY. No!

EDYTHE. James!

HENRY. Is it possible?

EDYTHE. I just now saw him leave my room loaded down with my jewelry. Everything in the room is stolen. I don't think he saw me. (*Starts for 'phone.*) We must call the police before he gets away.

HENRY. No. Er—he might hear you and run out before they get here. You leave it to me. If he thinks that no one knows about it he will stay.

EDYTHE. I feel so upset about it. I am afraid I am going to faint.

HENRY. No. No. Don't. Please don't. (*Runs to door, R., and calls.*) Cleo. Cleo. Come here. (*To EDYTHE.*) Don't get excited. I will fix everything.

EDYTHE. The wretch must have taken the rings, too. And the Count is coming. Oh, I must have those rings! Someone must find them. Help! Help!

(*Enter GRACE, R.*)

HENRY. Help Mrs. Vander to her room. She is not feelin' well.

(*GRACE assists her.*)

EDYTHE. Oh, Cleo. If only you or I had been there.

GRACE. I do not understan', Madame.

(*The two women are in the doorway, R. Enter JAMES, C., with package.*)

JAMES. A messenger from the bank left —

(*He sees GRACE and stops.*)

GRACE (*to HENRY; meaningly*). I shall return at once, Monsieur.

JOB THIRTEEN

(*Exeunt GRACE and EDYTHE, R.*)

JAMES. Hi didn't see them.

HENRY. Fake up another package now, quick. Then take this and add it to the collection in the coal-bin.

JAMES. Hi 'ave already done so. (*Draws duplicate package from his pocket and gives it to HENRY.*) See, they are hidetical. Hi 'ave put a pencil mark hon this one so we shall not get them confused. "D" stands for "dummy."

HENRY. Good. Now hide the real one down cellar. (*Bell rings off stage.*) Who in tarnation is that?

JAMES. Hit must be the Count.

HENRY (*pulling up his sleeves*). Show him in.

JAMES. You take care of both packages 'til Hi return.

(*Exit C. HENRY takes up both packages and holds them side by side.*)

HENRY. Well, well. That's what I call pretty clever.

(*Enter GRACE, R.*)

GRACE. What's so clever this time?

HENRY (*startled*). Oh, I didn't know that you were coming back so soon.

GRACE. Your wife—ahem!—heard the bell ring, and suddenly felt better. She is very anxious to see the Count. (*Sees the two packages.*) Why did the bank send it up in two packages? Give them to me.

HENRY. Wait a minute. I have made a false package.

GRACE. What's the idea?

HENRY. I am afraid of James.

GRACE. We had better watch James and find out where he put that stuff he stole.

HENRY. We'll get that back, all right. He knows that a package has come from the bank, and may attempt to get it, so I've made a dummy.

JOB THIRTEEN

GRACE (*taking a package in each hand*). Just think.
I am now holding thousands of dollars in one
hand. But which? They look exactly alike.

HENRY (*pointing*). See that little pencil mark?
Everything depends upon that. That "D" means
—dollars! What *you* want is in there.

GRACE. Oh, what a dream!

(*She puts the dummy package in her apron pocket;
HENRY breathes a sigh of relief.*)

HENRY. Leave the other on the table so James can
get it if he wants it.

(*She places the real package conspicuously on the
table.*)

GRACE. I have it. I shall hide behind the screen until
I see him take it. I feel nervous about being fol-
lowed around with all this money in my posses-
sion. If I see him take that dummy I can breathe
easier.

HENRY. All right. He will probably come here to
look for it as soon as the room is empty. (*Aside.*)
I'm sure he will.

GRACE. And I shall follow him and find out where
he put all the stuff he took out of the boudoir.

HENRY. I feel it in my bones that you will find out.

GRACE. We must. I can't let that stuff get away
from me.

HENRY. And I can't let it get away from me!

GRACE. Good. We are agreed on that.

HENRY. So it would seem. I'll get out. You watch
for him.

(*Exit C. GRACE wanders around room; peers rest-
lessly out of both doors; fixes screen to suit her
in upper left corner; then looks out doors again.
She takes package from her pocket and gazes at
it.*)

GRACE. Worth almost half a million!

JOB THIRTEEN

(Puts it back in pocket. She listens at center door, and then rushes noiselessly behind screen. JAMES appears in door, c., with a box under his arm. HENRY tiptoes beside him, but stands back in the hall, away from the door. He silently points in direction of screen; JAMES nods comprehension; then walks into room and peers cautiously around for GRACE'S benefit. HENRY silently withdraws from sight.)

JAMES. Alone.—And there is the money! (He takes box from under his arm.) And 'ere is the jewelry from Bigelow and Smith, with the contents of the missus' dressing-table thrown in for good measure, all tied hup nice and neat, ready to take away. (He regards box. At intervals during the scene GRACE peeps cautiously around the left side of the screen.) Shirts! Old Van Derr thought he was putting something over on me. Let me see, where shall I 'ide this 'ere truck? (He looks around the room, then opens the bookcase down left and puts the box behind the books on the first shelf.) Stay there 'til you're wanted.

(MARIANNE and EDYTHER are heard talking off stage. JAMES listens a second, then grabs package from table and goes out center door to the right. As soon as he is gone GRACE rushes to bookcase, pulls out books and secures box.)

GRACE. You're wanted, right now.

(She dashes out door R., with the box, just before MARIANNE and EDYTHER enter c., coming from left.)

EDYTHER. Isn't it terrible? After all the money I have spent, and all the effort I have put into entertaining the Count, the psychological moment arrives, and still those rings have not turned up.

MARIANNE. They really don't make much difference, Mother.

JOB THIRTEEN

EDYTHER. Yes, they do. The Count must be impressed.

MARIANNE. Leave it to Father to make an impression on him.

EDYTHER. I'm half afraid to let the dear Count see Henry; but how can we avoid it? The Count expects us to do things in the Continental way. Oh, dear, those rings. (*She commences to cry.*) If I only had them.

MARIANNE. There, Mother, they don't matter.

EDYTHER. They *do*, I tell you. (*Sobbing.*) We must give the Count something to be proud of.

MARIANNE. Well, I like that. Aren't you proud of me?

EDYTHER. Marianne dear, I didn't mean that. Dear, you *will* marry the Count, won't you?

MARIANNE. Mother, dear, calm yourself.

EDYTHER. You *will* marry the Count?

MARIANNE. I will marry Count Egozzi next month if it is possible.

EDYTHER. I am so happy. (*Drying her tears.*) You are sure that you won't marry Dan?

MARIANNE. I promise you that I shall not marry Dan.

EDYTHER. Oh, what a relief! Your father thought that I would have a hard time to make you think as I do.

MARIANNE. I think that Father and I understand each other pretty well.

EDYTHER. I wish that I understood him, or perhaps I had better say that he understood me.

MARIANNE. What's the matter now?

EDYTHER. I am sure that I can explain the disappearance of those rings, and he won't lift a hand to help get them back.

MARIANNE. You can?

EDYTHER. Yes. And *I'm* going to get them back, if he won't.

(*Goes to 'phone.*)

MARIANNE. What do you mean?

JOB THIRTEEN

EDYTHE (*at 'phone*). Give me the police station.
(*To MARIANNE.*) Wait and see. Hello! Police Station? This is Mrs. Van Derr, 1320 Riverview Boulevard. Two days ago two valuable rings disappeared from my dressing-table; and I have every reason to suspect someone here in the house.

MARIANNE. Oh!

EDYTHE. Yes....Yes....Very well.

(*Hangs up.*)

MARIANNE (*anxiously*). What did they say?

EDYTHE. The officer on this beat is just leaving the station, and he will come here and talk it over with me.

MARIANNE (*uneasily*). Mother, what did you mean—about someone here in the house?

EDYTHE. I absolutely *know* who took those rings!

MARIANNE. Mother! (*In a small voice.*) Who?

EDYTHE. James!

MARIANNE (*with a sigh of relief*). Oh! How do you know?

EDYTHE. I saw him take all my jewelry not fifteen minutes ago.

MARIANNE. James a thief! And he came so well recommended. Does Father know?

EDYTHE. Yes; but he wouldn't let me call the police.

MARIANNE. Why not?

EDYTHE. I don't know. He acted very queerly when I told him about James.

MARIANNE (*with some hesitation*). James may have taken your jewelry; but he did not take the rings.

EDYTHE. I am morally sure that he did.

MARIANNE (*positively*). But he did not.

EDYTHE (*interested*). What makes you so certain?

MARIANNE. This.

(*She draws the two missing rings into view on a chain around her neck.*)

EDYTHE. Where did you get them? I have them in time. Give them to me. (*She takes them and*

JOB THIRTEEN

places one on her finger.) How thankful I am that I have them back in time. But how did you get them?

MARIANNE. I—I — Well, you see —

EDYTHE. How long have you had them?

MARIANNE. Since Wednesday afternoon.

EDYTHE. What? (*In a high pitched voice.*) WHAT? And you have let me suffer, actually suffer, for those rings, and you had them all the time. How could you be so cruel?

MARIANNE. I hated to do it, but —

EDYTHE. You *hated* to do it? Oh, I see. Your father was back of it! That is why he was so indifferent to my loss.

MARIANNE. I promised him that I wouldn't give them to you until to-morrow.

EDYTHE. In other words, *after* the Count's call. (*In a rage.*) Wait until I see that wretch.

(*Rings bell.*)

MARIANNE. Don't say anything, please, Mother.

EDYTHE. After the suffering—the *torture* I've gone through? I certainly shall. I am surprised that *you* would be an accomplice to such cruelty.

(*Enter JAMES, c.*)

JAMES. Did you ring, Madame?

EDYTHE. Send Mr. Van Derr to me immediately. Tell him it is important. (JAMES *bows and exits, c.*) What did he say when he suggested this low, mean trick to you?

MARIANNE. It was Wednesday afternoon—just before Cleo arrived, if I remember rightly. He said that now that you had a maid, and were going to acquire some run-down real estate in Massachusetts, perhaps in the excitement you wouldn't miss your ring for a few days; and that when you didn't have yours he would have an excuse to stop wearing his, and give his finger a rest.

EDYTHE. Oh-h-h! I feel as if I could give him eternal rest.

MARIANNE. So I took yours from your dresser, and told you mine was stolen, too. That's all.

EDYTHE. That's enough.

MARIANNE. I wish that you wouldn't say anything to Father. I was going to give them back to you in the morning; but I promised that I wouldn't before then.

EDYTHE. I'll protect you, dear.

MARIANNE. I wouldn't have told you if you hadn't called the police.

EDYTHE. Good heavens. I had forgotten.

MARIANNE. Are you going to tell them about James and the jewelry?

EDYTHE. No. Your father can handle that in his own way. The rings mattered the most. We can buy other jewelry any day.

MARIANNE. But the policeman will be here soon.

EDYTHE. I shall tell him it was a mistake, and send him away.

(Enter HENRY, C.)

HENRY (*very meekly*). Did you send for me, Edith, dear?

EDYTHE. I'll say I did.

MARIANNE. Now, Mother.

HENRY (*with a smile*). Here I am.

EDYTHE. And see what else is here.

(*She holds her bejewelled finger up.*)

HENRY. Marion, you promised me —

MARIANNE. I know that I did. But Mother was so upset that I couldn't hold out any longer. What difference does a few hours make?

HENRY. Ye gods! If Cleo — (*With a mirthless laugh.*) All right. Ha-ha. You see, Edie, my finger was so weary carryin' that piece o' junk around, that I just had to get out of it somehow.

EDYTHE. And you chose a critical time to decide that,

Could any time have been more inopportune for those rings to disappear?

HENRY. Or to return?

EDYTHER. What?

HENRY. Er—nothing.

EDYTHER. I know what you meant. You still think that Marianne and the Count are not going to become engaged. That is why you wanted the rings. You hoped to spoil my plans to have a titled son-in-law.

HENRY. Cool off. You have your rings, and your Count of no account is here.

EDYTHER. Now I shall have the Count come in. Soon Marianne and I shall leave the room, and the Count will ask you the fatal question.

HENRY. It may be fatal—to *him*.

EDYTHER. You be careful that you act like a gentleman. (*She goes to door c.*)

HENRY. Marion, dear, I'll kill him with my bare hands, if you will only say the word.

MARIANNE. He doesn't bother me, Daddy.

EDYTHER (*calling from door*). Count. My dear Count, do come here. (*To HENRY and MARIANNE.*) I shall show him the ring without delay.

HENRY. Some game o' quoits. Tryin' to ring the Count with that jewelry. Now I'd like to wring his neck with these. (*Holding out his hands.*)

EDYTHER. Henry!

(*Enter COUNT EGOZZI, c.*)

COUNT. Ah, good-afternoon, Mr. Van Derr. I am most charmed to see you.

HENRY (*gruffly*). Hello, Count.

EDYTHER. Oh, Count, here is something I wish to show you. See, our family crest.

(*Holds hand out to him, showing ring.*)

COUNT. How very fine. How beautiful.

EDYTHER. Each one of the family wears a ring like that whenever he goes out. Perhaps you haven't

noticed them before, as they have all been at the jeweler's being reset.

MARIANNE (*slipping off her ring*). Perhaps you would like to inspect it closer.

(*He takes the ring and slips it on his finger.*)

COUNT. Ah, my dear lady, how exquisite. Your family crest. Ah! What an honor to be acquainted with such a family.

EDYTHE. Henry, don't forget what I told you to do. Count, will you excuse us if Marianne and I leave you a few minutes? We will be back soon; and Mr. Van Derr will entertain you.

COUNT. Certainly. (*Bows low. Exeunt EDYTHE and MARIANNE, c.*) Mr. Van Derr, you certainly have a fine daughter.

HENRY. I can agree with you on that.

COUNT. It must grieve you to think that some day she will marry, and you must lose her.

HENRY. Oh, no. When the right man comes along I shall gain a son.

COUNT. H'm! Now we come to the discussion of who, in your estimation, is the right man.

HENRY (*bluntly*). I'll tell you. A good, honest, red-blooded, one hundred per cent. American!

COUNT (*embarrassed*). Oh.

HENRY. But it is up to Marion whom she marries. I have faith in her judgment, and her choice will immediately become my choice.

COUNT (*much relieved*). Oh! That seems very magnanimous to me. In my country the wish of the parents is always paramount.

HENRY. Things 're different over here. Take work, f'r instance. Here you are considered a bum if you don't work, while I understand in your land you're a bum if you do

COUNT. There are many queer things in this world.

HENRY (*looking him up and down*). You said it.

COUNT. What did I say?

EDYTHE (*off stage*). Henry! Henry, come here!

No, you can't! You take that right off. I sent for you.

MARIANNE (*off stage. Excitedly*). You have made a mistake, I tell you.

(EDYTHE and MARIANNE both talk together. There is considerable commotion. HENRY rushes off c., to left. COUNT stands still in the center of the stage.)

COUNT. What an eccentric household.

(GRACE rushes in c., from the right, carrying the dummy package. She runs violently into the COUNT. He grasps her by the wrists to save himself from falling.)

GRACE (*struggling to free herself*). Let me go. (*Speaking roughly*.) Let me go, I tell you.

COUNT. Why the undue haste, young woman? I thought that you were French. Where has your accent gone?

GRACE. Oh, Monsieur, please let me go. Eet ees verr important. (*She sees the ring, which still remains on his finger, and stares in amazement. In a whisper, dropping her accent.*) The ring! Shade of Cleopatra! Saved! We're saved! Listen. (*The COUNT is speechless in surprise.*) The bulls are here. I don't know just what the rumpus is about. I guess it's over a couple of rings that disappeared. I don't know anything about *them*, but I am sure to get the third degree because I've only been here a couple of days, and that will upset our plans. If I get away from here I'll beat it to the office. Tell Landry. (*JAMES appears in door, R., but is not noticed.*) Here's most of the stuff. (*She puts the dummy package in his pocket.*) I don't know where you came from so suddenly, but I was sure glad to see that ring.

(*Rushing to door, R., she collides with JAMES.*)

JAMES. My word, what is the disturbance?

JOB THIRTEEN

GRACE. Get out of my way, you bloomin' limie.

(She pushes him aside and dashes out.)

COUNT. What is this all about?

(Enter, C., EDYTHE, MARIANNE, HENRY and POLICEMAN, all talking at the same time. EDYTHE'S right wrist is encircled by a handcuff, the other end of which is held by the POLICEMAN.)

EDYTHE. You take that off instantly. The very idea!
I send for the police, and they seize me like this.

HENRY. Say, officer —

COUNT. How terrible. What has happened, Mr. Van Derr?

(He daintily places monocle in eye. POLICEMAN looks him over carefully.)

HENRY *(persistently)*. Say, officer, I'm —

POLICEMAN *(indicating COUNT)*. Who is this bird?

EDYTHE. This is Count Egozzi.

POLICEMAN. Pleased to meet you, Count. Shake hands. *(He seizes the COUNT'S hand and scrutinizes the ring.)* What have we here? Well, well, if it isn't more of the queen's jewels.

(He deftly slips the second half of the handcuffs over the COUNT'S wrists.)

HENRY. Count, what does this mean,—you an' my wife hitched up together?

JAMES. If Hi might so state, Mr. Van Derr, Cleo 'as just left the premises.

HENRY. She has! She is the one you want, officer.

EDYTHE *(pointing at JAMES)*. There is the one you want, officer.

JAMES. Oh, no.

EDYTHE. Oh, yes! I saw that man steal my jewelry. That is why I sent for you.

POLICEMAN. You and the Count here are what I am interested in.

MARIANNE *(indignantly)*. This is an outrage. My.

JOB THIRTEEN

mother is the one who sent for you. Don't you understand?

POLICEMAN. I don't care who sent for me. Those rings tell the tale. Every officer on the force had instructions this morning to nab *anyone* seen with a ring like that. The lieutenant showed us one which was a double of that one.

JAMES. The young person who 'as just departed 'ad one, sir. And she slipped 'im—(*indicating the COUNT*)—a package which looked like the one the bank messenger left, sir. (*Winks at HENRY.*)

POLICEMAN. We can soon find out.

(*Starts to search COUNT.*)

JAMES. In 'is coat-tail, sir.

POLICEMAN (*drawing package from COUNT's coat-tail pocket*). Here it is, sure as shootin'.

HENRY (*taking package*). The money saved. How glad I am.

(*Opens package. He is back to EDYTHE and beside JAMES.*)

JAMES (*with a nudge at HENRY; in apparent alarm*).

Oh, my good 'eavens, sir!

HENRY. Holy smoke!

EDYTHE. What is it?

HENRY. It is a dummy package.

EDYTHE. Where is the money?

HENRY. Cleo must have stolen it. If we can only find her. Officer, how can we get her?

POLICEMAN. Search me. We are busy rounding up all the gang. Perhaps we will get her with them.

HENRY. It would be like looking for the old needle in the hay.

COUNT. Perhaps I can be of aid. When the maid forced that package into my coat she said to me, "I'll beat it to the office. Tell Landry."

POLICEMAN. What office? Who is Landry?

HENRY. I'm Landry. The office is in the North Building. Robert Cutter is the name it's under.

EDYTHE (*too excited to wonder how HENRY knows so*

JOB THIRTEEN

much). Saved! Saved! Our fortune is not lost. Officer, go arrest Cleo and bring back my money.

JAMES (*with a glance at HENRY*). Mrs. Van Derr, the Cleo person must 'ave given your money to a man at the door. A suspicious looking person called not an hour ago and hasked for 'er. I saw 'er give 'im a mysterious package in a most suspicion arousing way; hand the package was shaped just like this one.

EDYTHER. Oh-h-h-h! Lost again.

POLICEMAN (*to HENRY*). How do you know so much about that woman's destination?

HENRY. I am Mr. Vander.

POLICEMAN. How do I know you are? Why didn't you say so before?

HENRY. There was so much excitement that I didn't get time. (*Takes a paper from pocket.*) Here's a duplicate of the letter I sent to the station givin' 'em the full list of places to be robbed; so you see that I am all right.

POLICEMAN (*respectfully*). Oh, you're the bird that tipped us off. You certainly did a good job in gettin' that information. Now you can tell me if these people I have the bracelets on are O. K.

HENRY. Sure they are. It's my wife and a friend o' the family.

POLICEMAN (*removing handcuffs*). I'm sorry that you got mixed up in this, but those rings are the secret sign of the gang of crooks we are rounding up. How in the world did you get hold of 'em?

COUNT. Your family crest a bandit's symbol, Mrs. Van Derr?

EDYTHER. Let me explain, dear Count. They—they must have been stolen from me.

POLICEMAN. I'm not needed here any longer. I'll go along. I'm sorry the mistake was made.

EDYTHER. We don't expect the police to do anything but make mistakes.

(*Exit POLICEMAN.*)

JOB THIRTEEN

COUNT. Ugh! Those horrible handcuffs. Do you feel all right, Mrs. Van Derr?

(EDYTHER seems ready to faint.)

MARIANNE. Mother, pull yourself together. Everything is all right now.

EDYTHER. Do you suppose that they will get the money back?

COUNT. Did they get much?

EDYTHER (*bursting into tears*). Every cent we have in the world.

HENRY (*solemnly*). And in my opinion we'll never, never see a single copper of it.

COUNT (*anxiously*). You don't really mean that?

JAMES. They may catch the Cleo person, but never will they find out who the mysterious person was that got that money.

COUNT. Perhaps they will. Some of these detective fellows are really clever.

JAMES. I saw the man who took that money from this very room, and I can tell you that 'e is clever. They'll never find out about 'im. (*Winks at HENRY.*) Never.

(*Exit, c.*)

COUNT. Are you sure that *all* your money is gone?

EDYTHER. Yes. We were transferring it, and had it all here, very foolishly in cash.

HENRY. We are dead broke. We'll sell the place and the auto, and I'll have to get my old job at the fact'ry back again.

COUNT. How horrible.

HENRY. We'll have to fire James and the other servants. And perhaps Marion can get a job—as a stenographer or something.

COUNT. How terrible. (*Suddenly.*) I must be going.

EDYTHER. What an unfortunate afternoon. Count Egozzi, perhaps you can come to-morrow?

COUNT (*coldly*). I am afraid not.

JOB THIRTEEN

EDYTHE (*eagerly*). The next day?

COUNT. To tell the truth, I don't know when I shall be at liberty. My social calendar is very full. Good-afternoon.

(*With a formal bow he exits, c.*)

HENRY. Of all the cheap pikers!

EDYTHE (*hysterically*). Oh, the Count! The Count! We have lost our money and the Count.

(*She sinks into a chair and sobs violently.*)

HENRY. I knew we'd lose him all right, when the money went.

EDYTHE. How terrible.

HENRY. Wasn't he?

MARIANNE. There, Mother. It is all right. I'm perfectly happy.

EDYTHE. Marianne! You promised me but a short time ago that you would marry the Count. And now you are happy that he's gone?

HENRY. You promised *what*?

EDYTHE. Your very words were "I'll marry the Count next month if it's possible."

HENRY (*stunned; to MARIANNE*). Did you say that?

MARIANNE. Yes, Father.

EDYTHE. And she also promised that she would not marry Dan.

DAN (*off stage*). I'll find my way, James, as usual.

(*Enter DAN. He seems overjoyed at something.*)

MARIANNE. Dan!

DAN. Well, well. A little family gathering. Just what I hoped to run into.

HENRY (*soberly*). I'm afraid that you'll want to run out again.

DAN. Why?

HENRY. I guess that we were all wrong, Dan. (*With a grimace.*) Marion has just confessed that she will marry the Count next month if possible.

DAN (*not disturbed*). Is that so?

HENRY. Yes.

DAN. *If possible*, she said? Well, it isn't possible.

HENRY. And she promised her mother that she wouldn't marry you.

MARIANNE. You folks must be careful to quote me correctly. I said that I would marry Count Egozzi *if possible*, and would not marry Dan *in the future*. (*Shyly*.) It is impossible to marry the Count, and I cannot marry Dan, because—because——

DAN (*putting his arm around her*). We were married this morning.

EDYTHE } (*together*). { WHAT?
HENRY } { You don't mean it!

DAN. Yes, sir. We thought it the best way to do away with the Count.

HENRY (*after a moment of silence*). I'm darn glad of it.

EDYTHE. What a terrific series of shocks I've had to-day. (*She is silent a moment, and then speaks softly*.) Dan, I've had my eyes opened to the Count's real nature, and—and I'm mighty glad that you two are married.

MARIANNE. Mother, do you really mean that?

HENRY. The end of the world is comin'.

MARIANNE. I'm so happy. I *wanted* to please you, but you chose such queer things.

HENRY. The Count sure was a queer thing.

EDYTHE. The last few minutes have been to me like a blow on a crazy man's head—they have brought me back to my senses. I realize now the things happiness depends upon—and it is not upon things which are so easily lost as titles and money. If we ever have any more money I won't let it be my god.

HENRY. Do you mean that, honest an' true?

EDYTHE. I do.

HENRY (*runs to door and calls*). James. James, come here quick.

JAMES (*off stage, just out of sight*). Yes, sir.

HENRY. Go down cellar and get that stuff out of the coal-bin.

JOB THIRTEEN

JAMES (*off stage*). Yes, sir.

HENRY. You're certain you mean that, Edith?

EDYTHER. Yes. Yes. I promise you that I'll live like a normal human being, no matter how little or how much we ever have again.

DAN. What has happened?

MARIANNE. We've been robbed.—But I don't care, I have you.

HENRY. Edith, I've a confession to make. I swung the hammer that hit the blow that brought you back to your senses. It was the only way out that I could think of. And it worked.

EDYTHER. What do you mean?

JAMES (*off stage*). Oh, sir, just as Hi reached the coal-bin they started three tons of coal down the chute.

HENRY. Did it bury the stuff?

JAMES. No. Hi got the stuff—hand the coal.

(*He enters c., carrying the package of money and the toilet articles and jewelry. His face and clothing are covered with coal dust. His hair and collar are disarranged. HENRY takes the package of money. JAMES puts the other things on table and then exits.*)

HENRY (*handing EDYTHER the money*). Here's the money, Mother.

EDYTHER (*amazed*). The money!

HENRY. Shall we buy the Massachusetts ruins?

EDYTHER. No, siree! Make it a bungalow for Marion and Dan. (*Looks at package.*) But how—why—what—

HENRY. I hope you'll forgive me, Mother. You see, it was like this—

(*His speech is cut off by the*)

CURTAIN

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THE OXFORD AFFAIR. A Comedy in Three Acts, by JOSEPHINE H. COBB and JENNIE E. PAINE. For eight female characters. Plays one hour and three-quarters. Scenes, interiors at a seaside hotel. Costumes, modern. The action of the play is located at a summer resort. Alice Graham, in order to chaperon herself, poses as a widow, and Miss Oxford first claims her as a sister-in-law, then denounces her. The onerous duties of Miss Oxford, who attempts to serve as chaperon to Miss Howe and Miss Ashton in the face of many obstacles, furnish an evening of rare enjoyment.

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